



Canisius High School TODAY

Spring 2015

ALUMNI PROFILE:
Tom Fontana '69

Also in this Issue:



The long
history of the
auditorium



2014-15
Student-
artist gallery



Celebrate
four NYS titles
(so far)



GAMBIT XLI
is a huge
success!



Drama Club
presents
Good News!



Canisius High School Spring 2015
TODAY

Canisius High School

1180 Delaware Avenue | Buffalo, N.Y. 14209
716.882.0466 | www.canisiushigh.org
Facebook: [canisiushs](https://www.facebook.com/canisiushs) | Twitter: [@canisiushs](https://twitter.com/canisiushs)
Instagram: [@canisiushs](https://www.instagram.com/canisiushs)



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair: Mr. Robert Reger '66

Vice Chair: Mr. Ronald Raccuia '86

Mr. Peter M. Augustine '83

Dr. Christopher J. Bartolone '81

Mr. Jeremy B. Beck '89

Rev. Vincent L. Biagi, S.J.

Rev. Kenneth J. Boller, S.J.

Sr. Charlene Fontana, S.S.J.

Mr. Matthew S. Hamp '71

Rev. Phillip G. Judge, S.J.

Mr. Timothy L. Kane '80

Mr. Kenneth J. Kencel '77

Dr. Thomas A. Lombardo, Jr. '65

Mr. Michael D. Madden '67

Mr. Rocco J. Maggiotto '68

Mr. Anthony D. Mancinelli '68

Mr. Anthony L. Manzella '72

Mr. Daniel P. Mecca '87

Rev. Joseph Rogliano

What's INSIDE



Canisius High School TODAY

FEATURES

6

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

His successes in television are many, but for alum Tom Fontana '69, memories of, and experiences at, Canisius High School continue to be an important part of his work. And his life.

10

FADED GLORY

The Canisius auditorium was once one of the region's most elegant musical venues. Decades later, it is in need of refurbishment. Relive the glory of its past and feel the urgency to restore its once-proud past.

13

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Alum Bob Nowak '66 went from blocking for the CHS football team to conducting for the pit orchestra. His path has led him through the Blue Doors and to the side of some of the world's biggest stars.

16

STUDENT ART SHOWCASE

No matter what the medium, CHS student-artists have shown off considerable talents all year long. Take a look at just a few of the masterpieces hanging all over campus.

18

21ST CENTURY ARTISTRY

The technology revolution has allowed CHS students to express themselves in new ways. The school's new digital media arts courses have been welcome additions to the curriculum.

Rev. Joseph Costantino, S.J.
President

Andrea Tyrpak-Endres
Principal

INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT TEAM

Craig Harris
*Vice President for
Institutional Advancement*

Deborah Burke
Director of Annual Giving

Thomas Lucia
Director of Communications

Colleen Sellick
Director of Special Events

Patricia Vukelic
Advancement Services Coordinator

Paul Zablocki '01
Director of Alumni Relations

MORE NEWS

- 4 President's Message
- 9 Good News!
- 12 Behind the Scenes
- 15 Fine Arts News
- 20 Sports Recaps
- 23 GAMBIT Review
- 24 Alumni News & Notes
- 26 Upcoming Events

ON THE COVER

One of the school's most acclaimed alums, Tom Fontana '69 has enjoyed a distinguished career as a television writer and producer.

His credits include such hit series as *St. Elsewhere*, *Homicide: Life on the Street*, *Oz*, and *Borgia*.

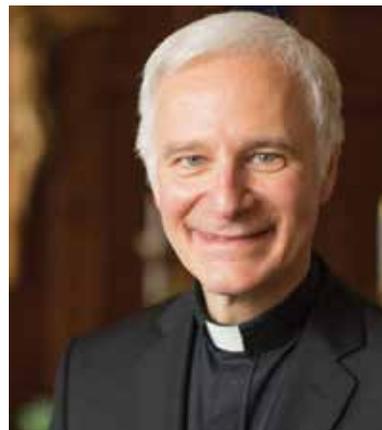
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Patrick Collins '16
Rev. Joseph Costantino, S.J.
Martin J. Haumesser
Thomas Lucia

PHOTOGRAPHY

Elliott Jerge '16
Thomas Lucia
Nancy J. Parisi
Thomas Wolf

From the PRESIDENT'S OFFICE



In our fall edition of *CHS Today*, we featured the school's long legacy of athletic excellence. And, since that publication, we have added to that legacy as the Crusaders went on to win New York State's first-ever All-Catholic championship in football, as well as state titles in basketball, varsity club hockey, and Federation hockey. What an exciting accomplishment!

We will not only recap these great successes in this issue, but also focus on yet another CHS legacy – excellence in the arts. I learned something about this legacy myself in the late 1970s when I was a novice in Syracuse. In my novitiate class was a CHS alum, the now-ordained Jesuit, Fr. James J. Miracky, S.J. '77. I still vividly remember the stories he told of being directed by Fr. Paul S. Naumann, S.J., in the school's production of *Richard III*.

While still novices, we had the privilege of coming to Buffalo to visit CHS, meet the Jesuit community, and see for ourselves what proved a grand production under Fr. Naumann's direction. Included among my many lasting and fond memories of that visit would be the first

time I stepped into the CHS auditorium. It was like no other high school auditorium I had ever seen. The aud makes a lasting impression on each and every visitor. In this issue, you will read about its history and the need to restore it to its former glory.

In these pages you will also learn about the accomplishments of two of our alumni who have dedicated their life to the arts. Their accomplishments are a major part of the CHS legacy of excellence.



Students surprise Rev. Costantino with a "Flash Caroling Session" in December.

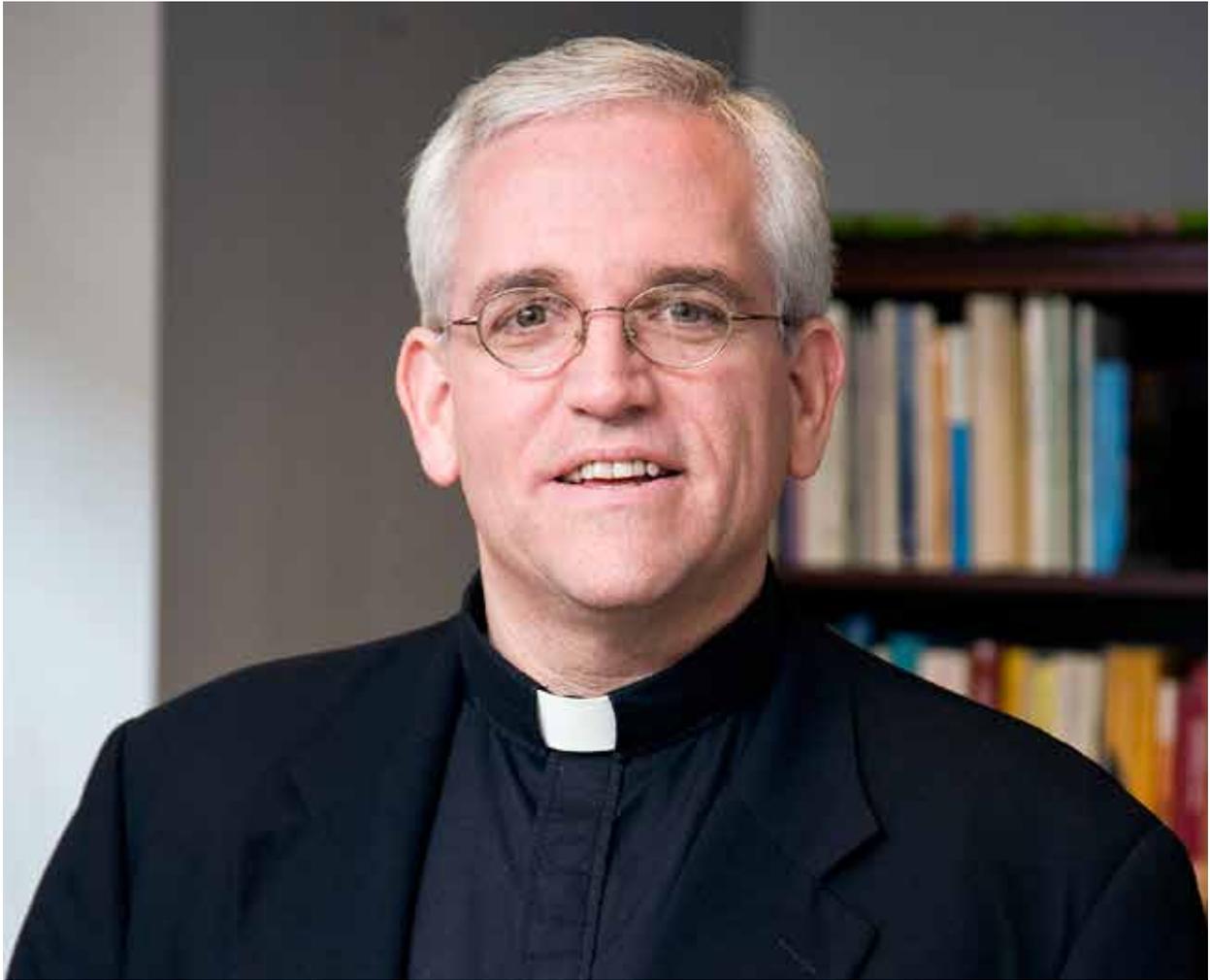
Joining them in this pursuit, of course, are our current students, who boast impressive accomplishments and boundless talent in music, drama, painting, photography, and our newest initiative – digital media arts.

As the past few issues of *CHS Today* have clearly demonstrated, Canisius High School is, without a doubt, outstanding. It is therefore hard for me to say goodbye to the many wonderful students, parents, administrators, faculty, staff, and all the generous and loyal alumni and friends of the school that continue to sustain its legacies.

My years here as president, like my first visit to CHS, will provide me with many lasting and fond memories. I will be sure to keep track of the school's future achievements, and there will surely be many, especially under its new president, Rev. David S. Ciancimino, S.J. With his considerable gifts and talents, he will no doubt build upon the legacies of excellence already here.

Know of my continued prayers for him, for you, and for Canisius High School.

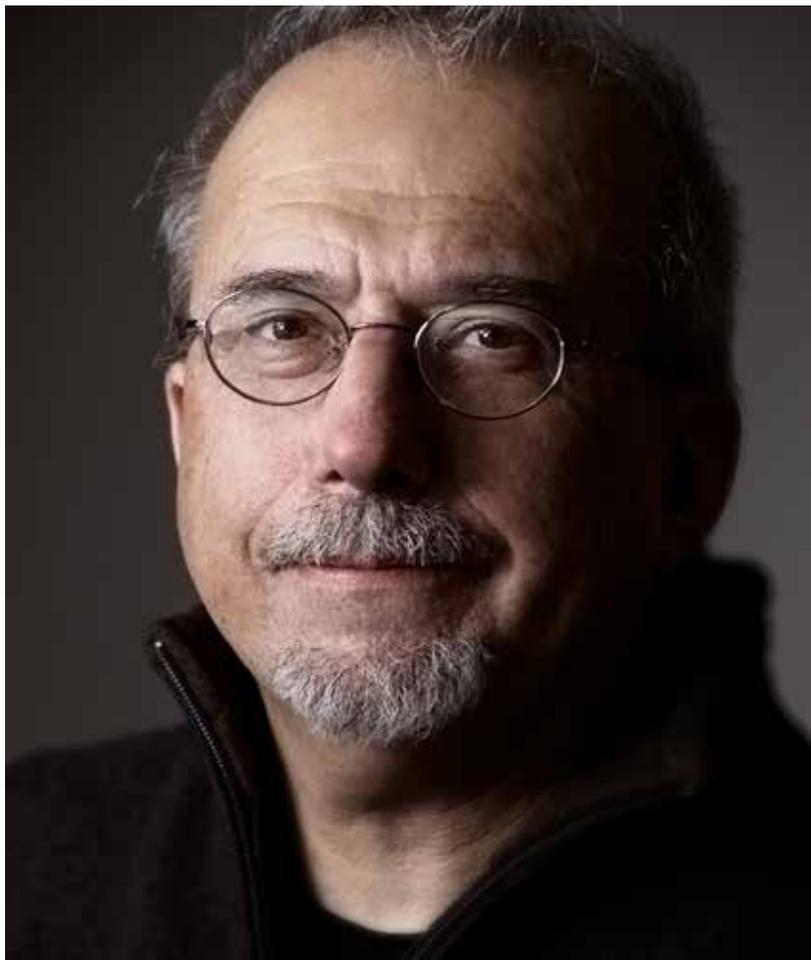
Rev. Joseph Costantino, S.J.
President



Welcome
**REV. DAVID
CIANCIMINO, S.J.**

The Rev. David S. Ciancimino, S.J., a former teacher, admissions director, and principal at Canisius High School, was recently named its 35th president by the school's Board of Trustees and the Jesuit Board of Members. We will feature "Father C" in the next issue of *CHS Today*. AMDG!





CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

CHS plays a distinct role in the work & life story of Tom Fontana '69

When Tom Fontana '69 was writing for the award-winning television show, *St. Elsewhere*, he named one of its most memorable characters – the irascible elderly patient Mrs. Huffnagel – after a Jesuit priest, Father Alvin Huffnagel, S.J., who taught at his alma mater, Canisius High School.

“When we introduced the

character of Mrs. Huffnagel, I got so many phone calls from my Canisius friends who thought it was wonderful that Father Huffnagel was celebrated in such a way,” Fontana recalls. “He was a teacher who was so far ahead of his time – an absolute health nut who would warn us of the dangers of eating white bread while extolling the virtues of grains and fruit.”

Fontana's episodic television series such as *St. Elsewhere*, or hit dramas *Homicide: Life on the Street* and *Oz*, had so many characters, he says, that the writers frequently had to come up with new names. And that's where Fontana would typically remember his high school days. “It got to the point where the people whose names I didn't use were calling and asking me why not,” Fontana laughs.

That's just one example of how the acclaimed writer and producer has carried his Canisius experience with him during a career that includes groundbreaking work for NBC, CBS, HBO, PBS, and independent films and documentaries. Fontana says that the school was an influence in developing his own character, calling a swim coach one of his most important mentors, and noting how the Jesuit focus on discipline has stayed with him all these years.

Fontana offers another example of how his alma mater's influence played out in his work. On *Homicide: Life On The Streets*, one of the other writers had gone to a Jesuit school in Chicago, as did the series' primary actor, Andre Braugher, who played Detective Frank Pembleton. During development, Fontana and the other writers established that the detective had gone to a Jesuit school. “A lot of what that character was about was created by three guys who had the experience of a Jesuit education,” Fontana explains. “We didn't hit viewers over the head with it, but we did embody the character with the Jesuit philosophy in terms of his sense of fairness, justice, and the ability to ask the

right questions. That was the influence of my Canisius High School experience."

OPENING CHAPTER

Fontana grew up on the West Side of Buffalo, the fourth of five children. He attended Cathedral School, now known as Catholic Academy, just down Delaware Avenue from CHS. He remembers a love of writing at a young age, creating plays and original stories as early as elementary school.

He was the only Fontana son to enter the school's signature Blue Doors – his two older brothers went to Cardinal Dougherty and the Calasanctius School, respectively, while his younger brother graduated from Hutch Tech. His sister attended Mount Saint Mary's and went on to become a nun.

Young Tom became familiar with Canisius through the school's summer camp, but, as high school approached, he envisioned joining his friends at Bishop Fallon H.S. on Main Street. His father, though, had a different story line in mind.

Fontana's father, Charles, was very involved in the West Side Rowing Club and coached rowing for several years at CHS before moving on to Canisius College. He had become very familiar with the Jesuits -- especially the infamous Father Sturm -- and their educational philosophy, so he insisted that Tom attend Canisius.

"Father Sturm and my father made a deal," chuckles Fontana. "To help with tuition, I had to work in the kitchen in the morning before class. I had to get up quite early. It was an experience that

actually helped me grow as a writer." This routine of waking at 5 a.m. before school allowed Tom time to write, undisturbed by his brothers, before going to work in the kitchen. "I have maintained that Jesuit discipline all these years and I still get up very early to write," he says. "And I can thank Canisius for that!"

LIFE LESSONS AT CHS

When your father is a rowing coach, being a member of Crew is pretty much a given, so Tom rowed the waters as a Crusader. Already interested in writing, he says that being exposed to a broad range of subjects at Canisius helped him sharpen his focus on the written word. "I was terrible at Latin, but as hard as the subject could be, I was absolutely fascinated by the classics," he recalls. "I also loved English and was a huge history freak – it was in these classes that I learned the power of language, storytelling, and character development."

Fontana says he also learned an important life lesson from his swim coach at Canisius, Paul Lamb. Calling the coach perhaps the single most influential mentor next to his parents at that young age, Fontana remembers that he was initially terrified to swim. The coach taught him to get past the fear and become a good swimmer. "I owe Paul Lamb a debt of gratitude because it was an extraordinary gift that he gave me, of being able to overcome fear." Fontana says.

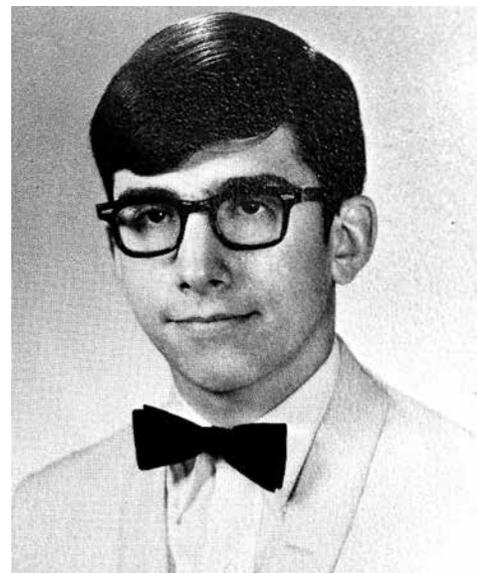
He would need this important skill many

years later. On the morning of September 11, 2001, he was writing at his home in Manhattan. The Twin Towers were visible from his back deck, and a phone call from a friend alerted him to the terrorist attacks that were underway. As Fontana watched helplessly, he saw the second tower collapse, and, to this day, still can't believe he witnessed it.

"Immediately after the attacks, New Yorkers were either afraid or they believed in the spirit of the city. Not both," Fontana says. "Coach Lamb's lesson on how having a core belief in your heart makes fear seem irrelevant came into play in a significant way during that turbulent time. I believed in the city and the spirit of goodness that existed in people there."

TURNING ON TO T.V.

After graduating from CHS, Fontana went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Buffalo State College where he acted and even had one of his own plays produced. His passion for writing led him to New York City after college, and he



Thomas M. Fontana, Class of 1969



Tom (far right) and classmate Douglas Sterner '69 look over the latest issue of the *Citadel* with advisor Michael Siconolfi, S.J.

was eventually offered his first opportunity to write for television there. The late director, Bruce Paltrow – husband of actress Blythe Danner and father of actress Gwyneth Paltrow – was launching a new series, *St. Elsewhere*, and asked Fontana to join him as a screenwriter. The rest is television history!

St. Elsewhere ran for six seasons, earned 13 Emmys, and drew acclaim as a groundbreaking series that would influence television drama writers for years to come. More success followed for Fontana, who powered *Homicide: Life On The Streets*, which ran for seven seasons on NBC, and *Oz*, an award-winning prison drama that had audiences in awe for six seasons on HBO. Industry pundits have long noted that it was the success of *Oz* that encouraged HBO to commission another epic series, *The Sopranos*.

Fontana says that his favorite T.V. shows as a boy included *Naked City*, a police drama; *The Defenders*, a courtroom drama; and *Rod Serling's The Twilight Zone*. He was also a

big fan of the often-surreal comedy, *Green Acres*. "I learned more about writing for television from *The Twilight Zone* than anything else," he says. "But I also had a passion for *Green Acres* because I loved the existential nature of the show – characters would be talking and out of nowhere would come fife and drum music or some other distraction."

He sees his own writing as a balance of the serious and the funny. "Sometimes the funniest things happen in the most dramatic, saddest moments. Comedy has to come out of a certain tragedy, or flaw," he notes. "My work, I hope, is a mixture of drama and humor, because to me, that's life."

CHS CONNECTIONS

Fontana knew Tim Russert '68, another favorite television son of CHS, who was a year ahead of Tom at the school. They became good friends and would see each other often as their paths crossed in the world of television. "Tim was a living example of Jesuit principles, always clear thinking and true to his

faith even when working in the difficult fields of television writing and broadcasting," Fontana says. "He was a role model for me at Canisius and throughout my life."

While he lives in New York City, Fontana still returns to Buffalo as often as he can, and is always happy to reconnect with family and friends. "I consider myself blessed to have two places I can call home: New York City and Buffalo," he says. "When I get a little lost in the hurried pace of New York or Los Angeles, it is good to come back to Buffalo, to my roots."

Canisius High School is never far away for Fontana, who stays connected to his school in many ways, including supporting a scholarship established by the late Beverly Eckert in the name of her husband, Sean Rooney '69. Rooney died in the World Trade Center's South Tower during the 9-11 terrorist attacks. Fellow classmate Fontana helped with the initial funding of the scholarship in 2002 by holding a benefit preview of his T.V. movie, *Judas*, at Canisius with all proceeds going to the scholarship. The film later aired on ABC.

STAY TUNED

Fontana's more recent work includes *Borgia*, a dramatic, historical series set in Italy that tells the story of a ruthless Renaissance-era pope and his rise to power. Filmed in locations throughout Europe and broadcast between 2011-13, the series is now available on Netflix. Fontana can't reveal the secrets of the project he is currently working on, but says it is a drama similar to the *Borgia* genre that is being developed for HBO and Showtime.

DRAMA CLUB PROVIDES GOOD NEWS!

This year's musical was another big hit

This year's spring musical, *Good News!*, was a huge hit, drawing large crowds to the auditorium to watch a talented cast and crew showcase their considerable skills.

The *Good News!* story centers around Tait College, a campus that is obsessed with football and the center of that passion is All-Everything QB Tom Marlowe (played by senior John Marszalkowski). One co-ed who seems immune to the buzz, though, is Connie Lane (Caroline Southard), an intensely studious young woman. Fate throws the two together when Connie is asked to tutor Tom in astronomy. If he can't pass, the superstar cannot play in the championship game. Can Connie make a star student out of Tom? What happens when the two start to fall for one another? And can Tait beat rival Colton College?

SPOILER ALERT: Yes. Sparks fly. And yes!

The cast featured a number of CHS students and young ladies from local high schools. Included among the Crusaders taking the stage were: Matthew Dolley (Coach Johnson), Marszalkowski (Tom Marlowe), Christian Sutter (Pooch Kearney), Sean Bittner (Beef Saunders), Daniel Arnold (Bobby Randall), Freddy Drzewiecki (Sylvester), Robert George (Announcer), Robert Sands (Ticket Taker), Jake Cody (Policeman 1), Ned Leslie (Policeman 2), Michael Lieberman (Slats), Casey Kurkowiak (Windy), Tomas Waz (Lefty), and Jacob Applegate (Grubs).

A number of student musicians performed in the pit orchestra for the show. They were: Alexander Dunn, George Burnett, Ryan O'Donnell, and Joseph Thielmann.

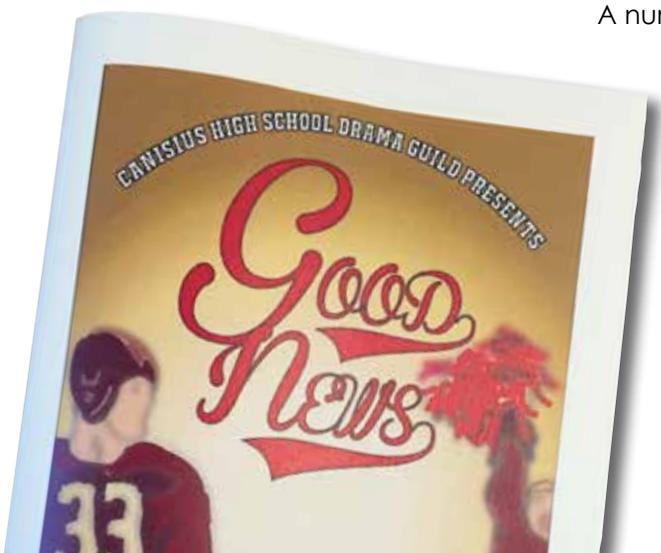
In addition, several CHS staff members, friends, and alumni were involved in the

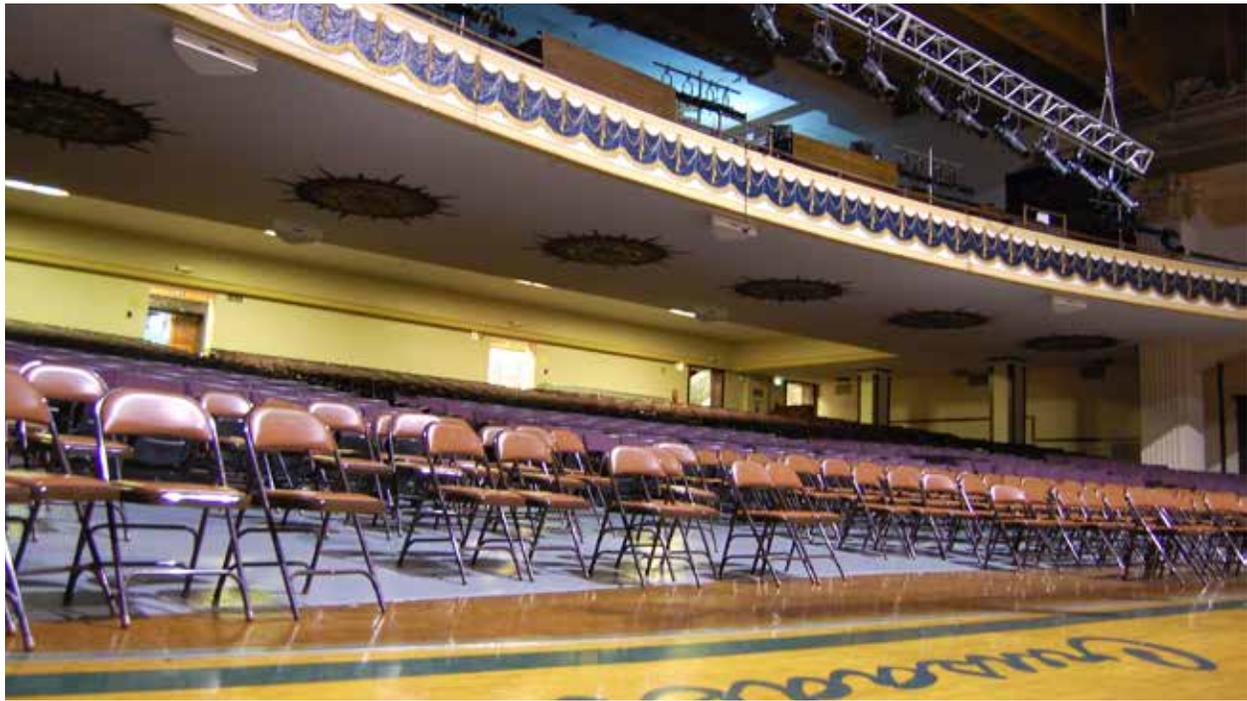


Can Tom Marlowe (played by John Marszalkowski '15) win the big game AND get the girl?

production as well. They included: Mr. William Group, Br. Christopher Derby, S.J., Mrs. Kathie Montante Prospero, Mrs. Michel Ann Group, Mrs. Catherine Pitek, Mr. Patrick Murphy '73, Mr. John Shotwell, Mrs. Brigid Monica, Mr. Don Williams, Ms. Sherry Taylor, Ms. Luciana Galante, Ms. Anne Lipp-Reed, Mr. Russell White, Mrs. Joanne White, and Mrs. Martha DiLoretto.

Congratulations to all of the Crusaders who were active in front of and behind the curtain!





FADED GLORY

The once-proud auditorium at CHS is beginning to show its age

If the walls of the Canisius High School auditorium could talk, oh what stories they could tell! From a world-famous Irish tenor, a 1970s rock superstar, to countless musical productions and concerts, the auditorium has played host to history like no other building on the Canisius campus. Even to this day, the auditorium serves as a vibrant heart of the campus, hosting student performances, assemblies, Masses, GAMBIT auctions, and graduation ceremonies.

But all those activities and all those years -- dating back to the 1920s -- have certainly put the structure to the test. The wear and tear is beginning to show. Ask any

Crusader who ever took to the stage, brought a date to a dance, or received his diploma in the auditorium, though, and he would agree that this special place has a legacy worth preserving.

"Alumni Hall, located in the front lobby of the auditorium, displays class photos of more than four generations of students," says Rev. Frederick Betti, SJ. "In fact, we filled the last remaining wall space with the Class of 2014. That is telling of the need to honor the building's past by making improvements for its future."

THE FIRST ACT

After the Rand Mansion on Delaware Avenue was acquired by the Free Masons in 1924, they set about

converting the residence to the new Buffalo Consistory Temple for masonic activities. The Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York added a large foyer, Turkish baths, bowling alleys, locker rooms, and the large auditorium for their use. It was an era when elaborate theaters such as Shea's Buffalo were being built across the country, and the consistory auditorium was said to be in the same league with the best of them.

In its early days, the building hosted plays, concerts and theatrical productions that were open to the public. The Masons designed the Consistory with an auditorium entrance -- what every Crusader knows as

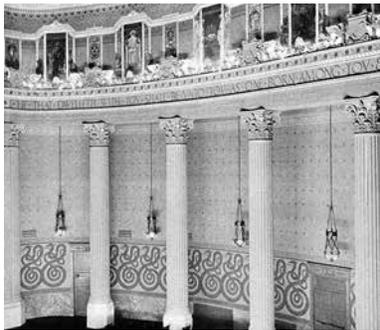
the Blue Doors – to keep the club's private activities separate from the opera lovers and music aficionados who attended the public performances.

Inside, the auditorium lobby was designed in the style of the finest hotels of the day. Ticket windows were inset within the wall closest to the doors. The lobby's marble staircases and promenades reflect the simplicity of the Greek architecture preferred by the Masons.

SETTING THE SCENE

Inside, the auditorium's neo-classical style captures the eye with 10 columns of the Corinthian order – five on each side – supporting the cornice (ornamental molding). Approximately 175 feet long by 115 feet wide, the auditorium towers to a height of 50 feet to the sunburst in the ceiling. The rays of the gorgeous sun, made of Tiffany stained glass, extend across the entire ceiling, representing the open sky. Recessed lighting designed to represent the constellations wowed audiences with an elaborate light show across the dark blue ceiling. In fact, what today appears to be a water stain is actually a representation of the many stars of the Milky Way.

Typical of masonic works, unique symbols can be found throughout the building. The original frieze included symbols of all the Mason Consistory degrees from the 4th to the 32nd. Detailed murals and elaborate stenciling that once graced the walls have long ago faded or been covered over during past building renovations and updates. At one time, the auditorium boasted the largest



Many of the auditorium's more elaborate features have faded with time. Photo by Forgotten Buffalo.

continuous, free-spanning balcony in the entire U.S. A pipe organ was located at the back of the structure, an unusual position in those days, but one that provided a richer sound for the audience. An innovative cooling system utilized fans with large blocks of ice to pump in cooled air during the hot summer months.

LENGTHY INTERMISSION

As the Great Depression hit in the 1930s, the Masons defaulted on tax payments and the City of Buffalo gained ownership of the Consistory property. The city used the property for public events, including concerts by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra before Kleinhans's Music Hall was built. Canisius College used the facility as a



At the top of the auditorium is a Tiffany stained-glass replica of the sun whose rays extend along the ceiling.

training ground for its Cadet Corps – the predecessor to ROTC – during World War II. When Canisius High School purchased the building from the city in 1944, the auditorium was moth-balled for a number of years.

Eventually, it was used as a gymnasium with the wooden floor – still evident today – installed over the original orchestra area. Since then, updates have been made to accommodate school events, plays, graduations, and other activities.

STAR POWER

A number of famous performers have graced the auditorium's stage. In 1938, while owned by the City of Buffalo, the building hosted the famous Irish tenor, John McCormack, on his farewell tour of America. McCormack was a superstar of his day who counted Hollywood celebrities such as Will Rogers and John Barrymore among his friends.

Then there is the infamous appearance by Gregg Allman and Cher. Many Crusaders recall the time when, in 1977, the rock star, his celebrity wife, and their children paid a visit to

the school. As legend has it, Canisius students were told they had to attend a mandatory science assembly. When the curtain was drawn back, they were surprised to see Allman and his band. "I am your science teacher today," Allman is remembered as saying before launching into one of the band's signature songs.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

While the glory of the CHS auditorium may have faded with time, it is too precious an asset to let slip into further disrepair. Structural improvements have been made over the years, including roof repairs more than a decade ago. Still, with an area of more than four acres, ever-aging structural elements, and other well worn-areas, upkeep of the building is a constant battle.

Restoring the auditorium – and updating it with more modern amenities – will take a major effort in addition to regular maintenance. The good news is that conversations have already begun on what is needed to ensure that the building can continue to serve Crusaders and their families for years to come.

If you'd like to be involved, please contact Craig Harris, V.P. for Institutional Advancement, at 716.200.0265.



Alumni Hall features class photos dating back 100 years! The last available wall space was taken by the Class of 2014.



The young men behind THE SCENES

Picture this: every seat in the auditorium is filled on this night. Every set of eyeballs in the place is transfixed on a talented young man who is on stage and in the middle of a heartfelt solo in which he is finally professing his love. The only sound that can be heard is his melodic voice echoing throughout the hall. It's a magical moment. And then, suddenly, the main spotlight POPS and goes dark! It's now show time for the devoted members of the stage crew.

"We're the first line of defense when things go wrong from a technical stand point," says senior Tucker Bushway. "We know that and we love it."

It takes a certain mentality to do what these unsung heroes do. To stay on their toes and be prepared to have to make split-second decisions. To have to routinely deal with crises without the accolades or the applause. But time and again, they do it and they do it well.

The team is made up of three groups - the Auditorium Tech Crew that oversees lighting and A/V needs for the various events during the year, the Stage Crew that focuses on the plays and musicals, and the Set Construction Crew that builds the large, elaborate set pieces. Despite different job descriptions, though, these Crusaders share a number of characteristics: they are consummate team players, they enjoy being active members of the CHS community, and they are united in their love and advocacy for the auditorium. "It's a second home to all of us," says Bushway. "In fact, during performances, I am here more than I'm at my house!"

So why do it? Why stress themselves out? Surely high school is difficult enough without having to worry about popping light bulbs, broken trusses, or aging equipment. Because they're family.

"I'm only a freshman and I wanted to get involved, but I wasn't sure where I could fit in," recalls Adam Helwig. "I finally decided to show up here for stage crew and I never left. I feel at home here."



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

You may not know Bob Nowak '66, but, odds are, you've heard him

Robert Nowak '66 went from making plays for Coach Johnny Barnes to making music around the world.

There aren't too many CHS alumni who can say they captained the Crusader football team and then went on to conduct the first band to play for the school's musical productions. Well, actually, there's just one: Robert Nowak '66.

He is an orchestrator and music arranger who has worked for renowned musicians from Natalie Cole, Liza Minnelli, and Bernadette Peters, to Tony Bennett, Burt Bacharach, and Elvis

Costello. While Nowak's work as a conducting Crusader was heard by students, faculty, and parents in the CHS auditorium, today his orchestrations, arrangements and commissioned works are heard all over the world!

Nowak is a multi-faceted musician and artist. He is a music copyist, a professional who creates the actual written music used during a performance or recording session. He is an arranger who adapts an original music composition for presentation in other than its original form. Think *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* as a full-blown symphony piece. His job is to determine what instruments

will actually play what in an arrangement. In addition, Nowak is a musician and composer. In fact, one of his compositions is a song called *No Big Thing*, an instrumental single that gained airplay on radio stations in the United States, Germany, and Japan in the early 1980s.

Music fans in Buffalo may remember Nowak as the bassist with the popular jazz-rock group, Flight, that used to fill local clubs during the 1970s. While his career took him in another direction after that, the musical explorations of that band led other members of Flight to form the internationally-acclaimed group Spyro Gyra.

TUNING UP

Growing up in St. Ann's Parish in Buffalo, Nowak says his family was not particularly musical, although his mother sang on occasion in a big band formed by her cousins. He and his older brother took piano lessons as young boys but, as he point out, neither one liked the lessons much.

His parish provided a scholarship to help Nowak attend Canisius High School. When he began at the school, he convinced his parents to allow him to stop the piano lessons to concentrate on his studies. "High school was the perfect excuse to stop the piano lessons," Nowak laughs. "Canisius was filled with so many things and I wanted to experience them all."

He wore blue and gold uniforms for several sports teams, playing football and running track, and getting involved in basketball. After an injury in his junior year, though, Nowak joined the Glee Club to fill the void. "That was unheard of. Only

geeks and wimps sang," he muses. "But I thought it was pretty cool, and before long, I had more football players singing in the Glee Club."

A DIFFERENT CHORD

Wearing No. 72, Nowak captained the football team that went undefeated his senior year (*he is pictured on this page holding a teammate on his shoulders*). He received honorable mention on that year's All-WNY team, and at graduation, he had a number of offers to play football in college. But the allure of music had captured his ear.

By his junior and senior years, Canisius had begun staging musicals – up until that time, productions had been plays. Nowak recalls the first production he was involved with in his junior year was Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore*.

The following year, Father Daniel Grosso, S.J., came to teach at Canisius. Fr. Grosso could write music and arrange it on paper, the first time Nowak had seen such a thing. "That was astounding to me," he remembers. "Father put together a band to accompany the school musicals. He found students who played instruments and asked me to conduct. I didn't know the first thing about it, but he thought I would command more respect as a football player."

Nowak conducted two musicals at CHS: *The Fantasticks* and *Paint Your Wagon*. He couldn't have foreseen that, 40 years later, he would be conducting for the likes of Natalie Cole.

ARRANGING A FUTURE

By his senior year, Nowak had decided music was what he wanted to do. Upon graduation, he walked away from football scholarships and registered at Canisius College. He attended for a semester and then left to tend to his family's business – a candy wholesaler – when his father became ill.

Later, he was persuaded by a neighbor to attend Fredonia. There, Nowak studied with Dr. Charles Arnold. After college, he continued his



“...and before long, I had more football players singing in the Glee Club.”

studies with Theodor Mayer, long-standing principal bassist of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

His immersion into the rich music scene in Buffalo led Nowak to an apprenticeship with professional arranger and copyist, Tony Ragusa. Soon, though, the bright lights of New York City called. He worked there as a composer and arranger, and as a studio bass player at RCA Records, lending his talents to national commercial jingles. And while honing his arranging talents on Broadway musicals, films, and other

productions, Nowak formed his own company, Robert Nowak & Associates, Inc.

THE BEAT GOES ON

Today, he lives in Buffalo with his wife, Pamela Roetzer, whom he met in college, and splits his time between the Queen City and his New York City office.

Currently, Nowak is the orchestrator for renowned American composer, William Perry. In fact, his latest work can be heard on the Naxos Records CD, *Music for the Great Films of the Silent Era Part 2*. He also writes music for symphonic performances and helps artists such as Kristin Chenoweth store and care for their music.

He orchestrated *VLAD*, a musical production based on *Dracula*, written by Placido Domingo, Jr., and produced by his father, renowned tenor Placido Domingo. In fact, upon hearing one of the numbers orchestrated by Nowak, the elder Domingo praised his work with an exuberant, "Benne! Benne!"

He has stayed in touch with CHS classmates such as Bob Reger '66, current chairman of the school's board of trustees. Nowak also meets regularly with a social group of CHS alumni and participated in this spring's freshman retreat.

"It feels like the blink of an eye since my days at Canisius High School," Nowak concludes. "As a way of expressing my appreciation, I note on my web site that I am a proud graduate of Canisius."

ARTISTS IN THE CLASSROOM (& BEYOND)

CHS Student-Artists Make News

ART CLUB MEMBERS MENTOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Nine students from St. Augustine School participated in a series of afternoon art lessons at CHS taught by members of the school's Art Club and the group's supervisor, Mrs. Catherine Pitek.

The six sessions featured students from both schools working side-by-side to explore three-dimensional paper structures after viewing images of classical architecture. They also used watercolor paints to explore color theory while experimenting with various techniques and tools. Finally, they tried their hand at observational drawing techniques.

The St. Augustine students' work was displayed alongside CHS students' pieces at the school's Spring Celebration of the Arts on April 30.



STUDENT ART SHOWN THROUGHOUT WNY

A number of CHS student-artists' work was chosen to hang in locations throughout WNY. A few included:

Student Celebration of the Visual Arts Exhibition at U.B. Feb. 7-8. The following students displayed their artwork: Zachary Perez, Matt Esack, Marquis Draper, Jacob Morse, Zakariah Leo, Conner Gawronski, Matthew Napier, Justin Slate, Patrick Walters, Levi Collier-Hezel, Daniel Leslie, Alec Sass, D. Terrell Brown, Charlie Stube, Ryan Grieco, Riley Besecker, Alafias Satcher, J. Luke Maxwell, Gregg Mojica, Liam Cleary, Frederick Drzewiecki, and Noah Schlee.

The Daemen College All High Exhibition Feb. 8-12. Art displayed at this exhibit was created by Michael Paw, Marquis Draper, and Zachary Perez.

ALL-COUNTY MUSICIANS

It was announced earlier this year by the Erie County Music Educators Association (ECMEA) that seven CHS student-artists earned spots in all-county ensembles.

- Logan Gare (Alto Sax) - 1st chair All-County Jazz Ensemble 3 and alternate for All-County Jr. High Concert Band North
- John Quinlan (Trombone) - All-County Jazz Ensemble 2
- Andrew Vincent (Baritone Sax) - alternate All-County Jazz
- Andrew Lynch (Baritone Horn) - All-County Concert Band
- Michael Tierney (Trombone) - alternate All-County Concert Bands
- George Burnett (Violin) - All-County Jr. High Orchestra North
- Matthew DellaNeve (Alto Sax) - All-County Jr. High Concert Band North





STUDENT-ARTISTS' PORTFOLIO

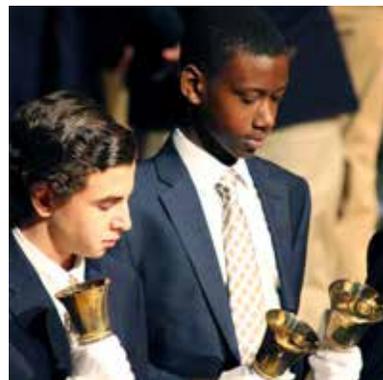
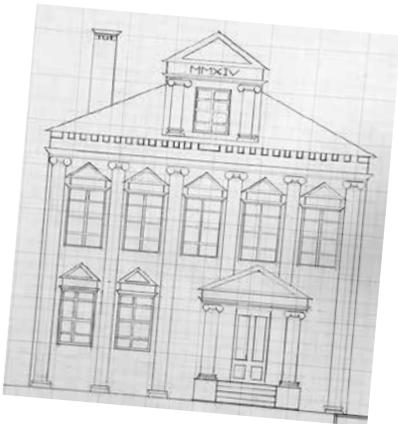
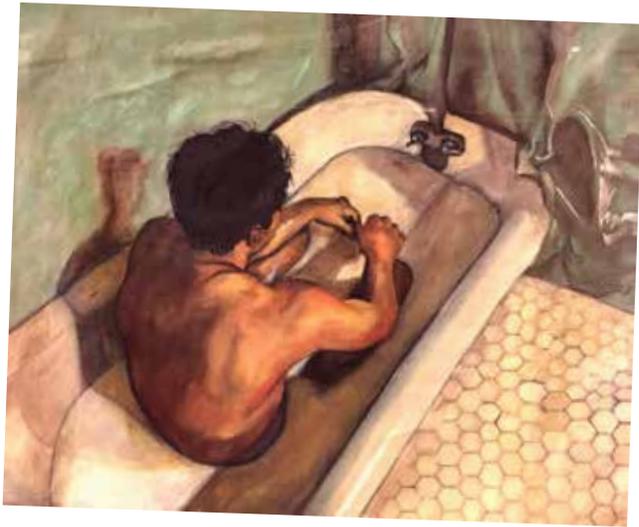
The talent of CHS's many student-artists knows no bounds. These two pages include just a sampling of the school's 2014-15 student portfolio!





LEFT PAGE. Top row: Student paintings hang all year long in the main lobby. Second row: The annual Coffee House event in February featured several performances by students; Drawing by Jacob Morse; Cardboard sculpture by Jack Flynn and Finn Robb. Third row: Multi-media sculpture by Jacob Morse; Members of the choir sing at the Bishop's Mass.

THIS PAGE. Top: Nick D'Amato and the members of the band starred in several concerts this year. Second row: Painting by Zachary Perez; Illustration by Marquis Draper. Third row: Architectural rendering by Brendan Mason; Painting by Charles Stube; Painting by Michael Paw. Bottom: Christopher Cardillo and Steve Kabayiza participate in the Bell Choir.





"The new digital media arts center allows students to be creative with new tools," said Mr. William Blenk, who teaches a variety of classes in the new technology center. "It provides students with a new way to express themselves, whether it be through the school's podcast, sharing a movie on YouTube, or showcasing their work via websites."

The implementation of the new digital media arts program has fostered the growth of several new classes such as broadcasting, film making, graphic design, and web design.

For learning experiences outside of the classroom, a film and animation club is available to students who are interested in learning more about graphics and video-making. And several Crusaders had the chance to sharpen their play-by-play skills at several sporting events over the past year through the school's new online radio station.

Over the past several years, Canisius has shown its eagerness to keep up with the hottest trends in the realm of technology. With the new digital media arts center, more opportunities will be available to students in their future endeavors, both in and out of the classroom.

21ST CENTURY ARTISTRY

Digital Media Arts courses marry technology & the Arts

Special to CHS Today by Patrick Collins '16

From cell phones and computers, to social media and the Internet, technological advancements have made everyday tasks easier for people throughout the world. At Canisius High School, this technological explosion has created a whole new experience for students.

In 2012, CHS took its first steps in enhancing the school's technology when it unveiled an ambitious, one-to-one iPad program. Instead of carrying around heavy textbooks and marble notebooks, students access all the information they need directly from their iPads.

This year, though, a new set of changes can be seen in the basement of Berchmans Hall. Funds from the student-run Walkathon fundraising event were used to create a new digital media arts center. Old and outdated computers were replaced with Apple iMac desktops. New video and camera equipment was purchased, along with a green screen to allow for video production. And photo-editing software was installed for those intrigued by graphic design and animation.



Seniors Andy Helwig and Frank Falkiewicz are on the air!



SUMMER at CHS



Accelerated Learning Program

CHS offers several enrichment courses to high school students from throughout WNY (not just Crusaders) allowing them the opportunity to get ahead of their core requirements.

For course descriptions and registration information, check the website or contact Kathleen Riley, Summer Session Coordinator, at 200-0319.

www.canisushigh.org/summer



HAP

HAP is a full-day, five-week summer camp specifically designed for boys who have just completed the 7th grade. The program provides its participants with a dynamic and unforgettable blend of academics, fitness, and fun each day.

Only a limited number of spaces are available. Register today! For more information, check the website or contact Michel Ann Group at 200-0204.

www.canisushigh.org/hap



Sports Camps

CHS student-athletes benefit from a proven approach that is designed to make them strong of mind, body, and spirit. The school's summer sports camps give boys who have completed grades six and seven the opportunity to experience the "Crusader Way" for themselves.

For detailed camp information, check the website or contact Jim Mauro, Athletic Director, at 882-0466.

www.canisushigh.org/camps



The varsity football team went 12-0 and captured the state's first-ever Catholic High School championship.

SPORTS RECAPS

Four state championships highlight a historic 2014-15

The 2014-15 fall and winter sports seasons were historic in their success. Consider the highlights: four NYS championships, two state Player of the Year honors, and five Msgr. Martin titles. It has certainly been a year to remember for CHS athletics (so far).

CREW (FALL)

Participating in several ultra-competitive regattas, including the renowned Head of the Charles, the Crusaders earned four total medals -- one gold, one silver, and two bronze.

CROSS COUNTRY

The cross-country team placed third at the Msgr.

Martin meet. Individually, junior Liam Gallagher finished in second place and earned the right to run in the NYS Federation cross-country race. There, he finished 71st out of 257 runners.

FOOTBALL

It was an unforgettable season for the varsity football team that went undefeated (12-0), earned a Msgr. Martin title, and won the first-ever NYS Catholic High School Athletic Association championship by beating Archbishop Stepinac H.S., 23-10. The Crusaders finished the year ranked No. 1 in the state by the NYS Sportswriters' Association and No. 30 in the nation by *USA Today*. University of Michigan-bound

senior TE/DE T.J. Wheatley, (above photo, far left), was named WNY and NYS Player of the Year.

GOLF

The golf team finished its season with a record of



The volleyball team went 26-4 and won its 15th-straight league title.



The varsity basketball team beat two of New York's top-ranked squads en route to its state title.

8-4. Matthew Santora and John McMahon, with scoring averages of 38 and 40, respectively, both made it to the state qualifying tourney.

SOCCKER

The soccer team (13-6-1) entered the Msgr. Martin championship tournament as a No. 2 seed and earned a shot at the title by defeating St. Francis 3-1 in the semifinals. In what turned out

to be an epic title match, the top seed, SJCI, edged the Crusaders on penalty kicks after the two teams were scoreless through two halves and two overtimes.

VOLLEYBALL

They did it again. The volleyball team finished its season with a 26-4 record and won its unprecedented 15th-straight Msgr. Martin title by defeating SJCI in four sets.

Sophomore Griffin Schmit and senior Trevor Gooch were both named to the All-WNY first team, while Tom Weislo earned WNY Coach of the Year honors.

BASKETBALL

The basketball team (above) made history by posting a 25-5 record and defeating two of the state's top four teams en route to a Class A Federation Championship.



The Federation hockey team dominated Chaminade H.S., 6-1, to earn a NYS championship.

En route, the Crusaders won their fourth league title in five years. Individually, junior Stafford Trueheart and senior LaTerrance Reed were both named All-WNY first-team members, with Reed earning NYS Co-Player of the Year honors.

BOWLING

The bowling squad placed second in the league this year, getting passed on the very last day of the season. Nick Rallo's perfect game (300) was a highlight.

FEDERATION HOCKEY

The Federation hockey team played its best at the perfect time, upsetting defending champ SJCI, 2-1, in the league tournament and then beating Chaminade H.S. convincingly by a 6-1 score to earn its first NYS Catholic Schools Championship (*photo on the bottom of the previous page*).

INDOOR TRACK

The indoor track team had a tremendous season, bolstered by great performances from Desmond



The swimming team went 22-1 and won its 13th-straight All-Catholic title.

Nicholas, Charles Hornberger, Jaelin Marong, and A.J. Satcher. Nicholas placed fourth in the 55m dash at the NYS Championships.

SWIMMING

The swimming team finished its season with a 22-1 record and won its 13 consecutive All-Catholic title. Individually, seven Crusaders -- Thomas Chameli, Allan Collins, James Pokornowski, John Quinlan, Jake Ruffolo, Sam Sawyer, and Andrew Wojtowicz -- qualified for the NYS Federation meet. There, Sawyer broke a school and league record in the 100m backstroke with a time of 53.34.

VARSITY CLUB HOCKEY

After losing a double-overtime, heart-breaker in the league championship game, the varsity club hockey team turned it up a notch. The Crusaders (*photo below*) swept the NYS tourney in impressive fashion, going 5-0 and outscoring their opponents 27-7 en route to a state title.

WRESTLING

The wrestling team sent 14 student-athletes to the NYS Catholic High School championships. In addition, senior Solomon Renfro qualified for the state Federation meet.



The varsity club hockey team won its last five games on the way to a NYS championship.



GAMBIT XVI

This year's GAMBIT fundraising event, held March 21, was a huge hit, grossing more than \$400,000 for the students and programs of Canisius High School. Co-chair couples Kevin '82 and Therese Quinn and Bill '84 and Jody Quinn, and ambassador Rev. Ronald Sams, S.J., '46, led the way.

Event highlights included the GAMBIT Loyalty Award going to Peter Travers '60 and a very special "Fund an Item" drive that raised nearly \$90,000 to provide healthy lunches to students-in-need after a touching appeal from senior Elias Lipka.

Thanks to the many volunteers, helpers, supporters, and sponsors who made this special evening such a success. Save the date for GAMBIT XVII, which will take place April 16, 2016!



ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

William Knorr '45 is serving as president of his neighborhood association and serves on the board of directors of his community center's foundation.

Eugene Vukelic '48 received the Community Impact Award from Erie Community College.

Chester Zmijewski '50 and his wife, Helen, recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

Stan Cieslar '53 was inducted into the Bishop Fallon High School Hall of Fame as a former faculty member.

Ed Skerrett '56 recently visited Vietnam with his son, having previously been stationed there during his time in the U.S. Army.

John Marszalek '57 published a book titled *Lincoln and the Military*, the 11th novel by the Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Mississippi State University.

D. Robert McGinnis '58 retired from Auburn University as Vice President for Development and Senior Counsel to the President. He was named Vice President for Development, Emeritus.

Walter Borowiec '59 was selected to be a trustee on the Seymour Library Board in Brockport, N.Y.

Michael Shurgot '61 wrote a memoir titled *Could You Be Startin' from Somewhere Else? Sketches from Buffalo and Beyond*.

Fr. Pascal Ipolito '62 is the pastor of St. George's Church in West Falls, N.Y.

Lawrence Michael '65 was inducted into the Buffalo Harvard Cup Hall of Fame as a football official.

Hon. Christopher Burns '70 was inducted into the WNY Baseball Hall of Fame in September of 2014.

Dr. Thomas Virginia '71 is teaching Latin at Amherst H.S., Sacred Heart Academy, and Christ the King Catholic Grammar School.

Peter Adornetto '73 received the Pro-Vita Award from Bishop Malone of the Diocese of Buffalo in January 2015.

Bill Pericak '73 recently joined Jenner & Block in Washington, D.C., after serving 25 years with the Department of Justice.

Mark Saltarelli '73 was named 2014 Man of Honor by the *Tonawanda News* and 2014 Citizen of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas.

Timothy Catlin '78 was elected President of the West Point Association of Greater Kansas City.

Peter McElroy '82 is the CDC Team Lead for the President's Malaria Initiative, working in 19 countries.

Mike Jones '89 is the General Manager of U.S. Sports Properties, working on the University at Buffalo athletic department's corporate partner and sponsorship programs, corporate hospitality, and sales for media productions.

Jason Krempa '93, V.P. of Commercial Lending at Northwest Savings Bank, was named to *Buffalo Business First's* "40 Under 40" list.

Jim Lilley '96 and wife, Christy, welcomed Katherine "Kate" Anne on March 9, 2015.



Lee Siracuse '85 and his wife, Suzanne, are featured in posters throughout NYC as the city's "Kindest Pet Owners."

Dennis Baker, S.J., '98 was ordained as a permanent Deacon in October of 2014.

Tim Marren '99 and wife, Katie, welcomed their daughter, Emma Katherine, on March 13, 2015.

Daniel Amigone '00 writes and produces T.V. shows. His work includes *Road to the Winter Classic* on HBO.

Christopher Pitek '00 and his wife, Melissa, welcomed Addison Leah on April 19, 2015.

Jack Turner '00 was named principal of Tapestry Charter School in August 2014. He and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed Josephine Helen on Oct. 11, 2014.

Adam Baber '01 was named Principal of McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester, N.Y.

Ryan Francis '01 and the former Heather Silverhorn were married on Dec. 13, 2014, in Siesta Key, Fla.

Joe Zera '01 and his wife welcomed Brooklyn Elizabeth Zera. She was born on Jan. 9, 2014.

Mike Cacho '02 and his wife, Lindsey, welcomed their second child, Emma Rose Cacho, on Oct. 27, 2014.

D. Steven Coppola '02 and wife, Katie, welcomed Constance Belton Coppola "Connie Bel" on Feb. 7, 2015.

James Rahill '02 and his wife, Erika, welcomed Ryan James Rahill on Feb. 5. The couple lives in Boston.

Joseph Fricano '03 married Courtney Schmitt on June 6, 2014, at the Otesaga Resort in Cooperstown, N.Y. They will reside in Pittsburgh.



Dayle Hodge '01 recently spoke with students about his career path, what to expect in college, and his glory days at CHS.

James Fricano, '05 married Amanda Randazzo on April 25, 2015, at St. Mary's church in Swormville, N.Y. They will reside in Houston.

Christopher Hamm '05 earned a master's in Student

Personnel Administration from Buffalo State College and currently serves as the Catholic University of America Student Center Operations Coordinator.

John Roach '05 is a Structure Engineer at Cannon Design and serves as a volunteer firefighter for the Main-Transit Fire Department.

Thomas Bender '08 and wife, Colleen, welcomed Griffin Bender in June.

Max Hain '08 earned a full scholarship to pursue a master's degree from the Gemologist Institute of America.

Connor O'Brien '13 is studying Criminal Justice/Forensics at Xavier University.

In Memoriam

We remember alums who have passed away since the Fall of 2014:

John J. Carrigg '39
Norbert E. Weckerle '41
Deacon John G. Wick '42
Dr. James A. Curtin '43
Arthur A. Roetzer '43
Dr. Joseph T. Quinlivan '44
Sylvester Dobrowolski '45
Dr. Joseph Mattimore '45
Thomas F. Collins '46
Richard J. Dobmeier '46
M. Spencer Ferris '46
Melvin L. Ruminski '46
John L. Burns '48
William J. Cotter '48
Dr. Richard Romanowski '49
Rev. Eugene
A. Zimpfer, S.J. '49
Eugene A. Boczar '50
Brian D. O'Leary '50
William J. Wiedeman '50
Thomas J. Williams, Jr. '50
Francis J. Bajer, Ph.D. '51
Daniel L. Kaye, Esq. '51
John J. Otoka '51
Anthony J. Morano '52
Frederick J. Roeder '52

John J. DiPasquale '53
Terrance P. Shea '53
Michael J. Delgato '56
Anthony J. Maggio '56
Peter J. Bagarozzo, Jr. '58
Kevin M. Boyd '58
Eugene A. Czarcinski '59
William R. Farley '59
Dr. Russell P. Massaro '62
James P. Riordan '62
David M. Farley '63
Donald R. Guerra '64
Samuel P. Militello '65
Peter J. Murrett III '65
Terrence J. Babchak '66
Gregory J. Pratt '68
Vincent H. Kluge '71
Thomas M. Greer '72
Geoffrey D. Utz '73
Joseph D. Tomani '74
Jeffrey P. Slon '77
Neil R. Reilly '80
Daniel J. Mackenna '81
Joseph C. Basile '89
William P. Hartigan '08
Nolan M. Burch '14



ALUMNI WEEKEND

Relive memories of the "good ol' days" and reconnect with classmates. The full schedule includes:

Friday, June 19

Class of 1965, 1969, 1970 Golf Outing

8 a.m. shotgun start at Diamond Hawk.

OR

Tour the Darwin Martin House & Buffalo History Museum

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

OR

The Rev. John G. Sturm, S.J. '35 Memorial Golf Classic

Registration opens at 11 a.m. at Diamond Hawk. Shotgun start at 1 p.m.

All-Alumni Stag Dinner

On Tripi Field at 6 p.m. Live music and food under the tent.

Saturday, June 20

Alumni Charter on the Miss Buffalo

Departure from the harbor at 11 a.m.

Class of 1965 Dinner Reception & Golden Diploma Ceremony

"Golden Crusaders" gather at 6 p.m. in the Montante Cafeteria.

OR

All-Class Reunion Celebration

Live music, food, and fun at 6 p.m. in the Kennedy Field House.

Sunday, June 21

Father's Day Mass & Brunch

10:30 a.m. Mass in the auditorium followed by a delicious brunch.

Register online at www.canisiushigh.org/reunion. For more information, call Paul Zablocki '01, Director of Alumni Relations, at 716-200-0262, or email alumni@canisiushigh.org.

Upcoming EVENTS

COMMENCEMENT

Wednesday, May 20
6:30 p.m. @ CHS

FIRST FRIDAY MASS

Friday, June 5
7:45 a.m. @ St. Michael's

SUMMER SESSION: ACCELERATED LEARNING

Classes start June 29
8 a.m. @ CHS

HAP SUMMER CAMP

Starts Monday, June 29
8:30 a.m. @ CHS

LACROSSE CAMP

Starts Monday, June 29
3:30 p.m. @ CHS

FIRST FRIDAY MASS

Friday, July 3
7:45 a.m. @ St. Michael's

SOCCER CAMP

Starts Monday, July 6
3:30 p.m. @ CHS

VOLLEYBALL CAMP

Starts Monday, July 27
3:30 p.m. @ CHS

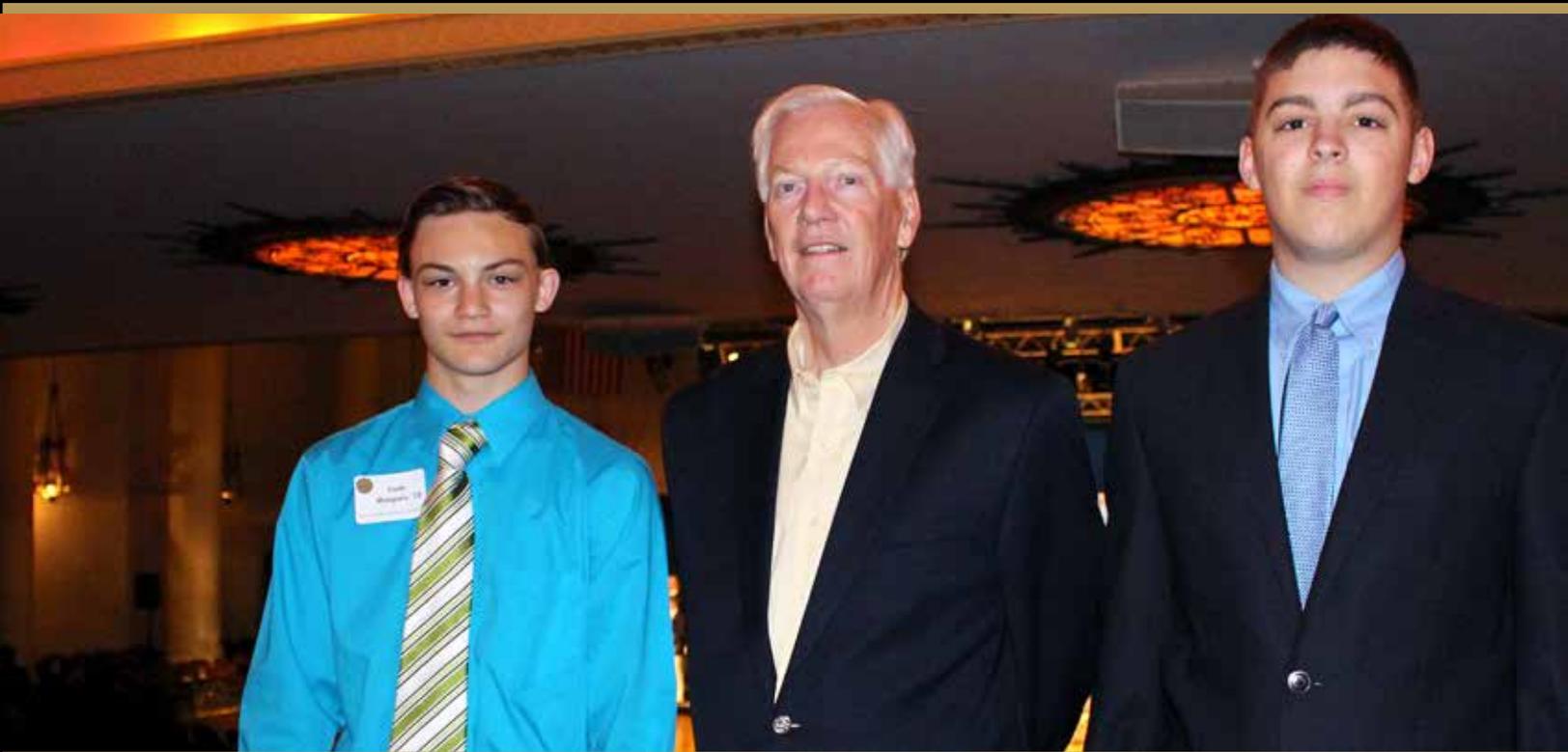
DOWNTOWNERS LUNCHEON

Thursday, July 30
Speaker Mark Schroeder
@ the Buffalo Club

Thank you,

Dennis Dougherty '59

for your commitment to the students of Canisius High School



Dennis Dougherty '59 is a retired General Electric executive who lives in Boston with his wife, Eileen. They were eager to establish the Loyola O'Hagan Dougherty Scholarship a few years ago in honor of Denny's mother who was an English teacher in the City of Tonawanda. The scholarship's mission is to assist boys from that community in getting a Canisius High School education.



For more information on how you can support Canisius High School's mission and students, contact:

Craig Harris
V.P. for Institutional Advancement
716.200.0265
harris@canisiushigh.org

"The Canisius experience vastly broadens the horizons of young men, giving them an exceptional academic background and instilling in them important Jesuit values. We are happy to share that with a new generation of boys."

While there are many different ways to assist the school and its mission, one of the most personal is through scholarships. The two students benefiting from Denny's generosity are pictured with him above.



Canisius High School
1180 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14209

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 847
BUFFALO, NY

