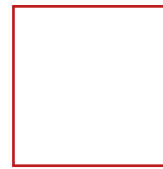




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**Winter 2021**

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL HIGH SCHOOL

*The* **WARRIOR**



**Mission**

.....  
 Fostering the spiritual, intellectual, & personal development of young people as committed disciples of Christ since 1984.

back cover

*The* **WARRIOR**



Story  
 on  
 Page 6

**New Administrators Face an  
 EXTRAORDINARY  
 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Winter 2021** ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL HIGH SCHOOL

front cover







# St. Michael the Archangel High School

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## Save the Dates Warrior Events for 2021:

### A "MASK"ERADE AUCTION

Saturday, March 6  
SMHS Campus

### 6TH & 7TH GRADE OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, March 21  
SMHS Campus

### MOONLIGHT & JAZZ

Sunday, April 18  
White Oak Plantation

### SENIORS HONORS CONVOCATION

Wednesday, May 19  
SMHS Campus

### SENIOR GRADUATION

Friday, May 21  
The River Center

# The WARRIOR



## Message From The President

As a Catholic School, St. Michael's mission statement makes it clear that the purpose of our work is to graduate young men and women of competence, compassion, and conscience, who are committed to leadership and service. This is work that is both challenging and rewarding, and it takes a community to do it well. At St. Michael it is not only our faculty, but also our staff, volunteers, students, parents and alumni who come together every day around this common purpose and shared mission to serve our students. Every year the Warrior Magazine gives us an opportunity to share some of their stories with you. Many of the people profiled in the magazine are people you know – veteran teachers retiring after long and faithful service, or fellow students and former classmates living out their vocations in their various careers and sharing updates on their lives. Others will be people you have never met – generous donors from years past or graduates from classes decades ago, as well as current students and brand-new graduates just beginning their life journey at St. Michael or beyond. What unites all of us, old and new, student or staff, recent alum or long-time benefactor, is the shared commitment to the mission and work of St. Michael.

Since its inception, a St. Michael education has been an important part of the Baton Rouge landscape. The mission of making a strong Catholic college-prep education available to all in our community who desire for their children, regardless of race, creed, or economic standing, remains at the core of our work today. The profiles in this edition – of men and women who perform this work, those who support it, and those students and graduates who benefit from it and take it out into the world for good – these are the clearest testament we can give to the impact of a St. Michael education on the people it touches.

Thanks for your continued interest in St. Michael, our community and our people. As always, your support and commitment is a vital part of enabling us to continue to provide access to so many families we otherwise could not reach. On behalf of all of us, thank you so much for the love and care for the mission, and students of this amazing institution.

God bless,

*Jack Nelson*  
President

*Jack  
Nelson*







Ellen Lee



### From Principal Ellen Lee

The St. Michael High School community has faced one of the most challenging semesters in our history as we began the school year with in-person learning in the midst of the worldwide pandemic. Our students, parents and teachers have lived out our mission and our school code, as all were determined to be safe and to continue learning as close to normal as possible. We recognized the value of our students returning to the classroom as the 2020-2021 school year began. Having students on campus allows us to continue their spiritual, intellectual, and personal formation.

As St. Michael Warriors, we act with courage and compassion. That certainly can be said of our faculty and staff. The challenges of returning to campus in August were overwhelming, but our teachers faced the obstacles with a willingness to take a chance for the benefit of our students. Along with the possibility of exposure for themselves, they also took on additional duties, including extra sanitizing responsibilities. Our teachers have also showed a real willingness to work with remote-in learners during quarantines. St. Michael parents and students trusted the school to do everything in its power to provide a safe and healthy learning experience. We are grateful for the trust and the partnership of the parents.

St. Michael High School also took the courageous step of offering fall and winter sports. Although students and parents alike knew the teams would incur an increased risk, all felt it was a positive thing that athletes could participate in school sports. Clubs also resumed meetings in early fall. Although the meetings looked a little different, students were happy to be given the opportunity to participate. St. Michael recognizes that clubs and sports are an important part of each student's personal development and growth.

As St. Michael Warriors, we have a deep sense of joy fostered by prayer and trust in God. We have been able to offer Mass once a month to all of our students and staff. Masses were offered every period of the day so that we could socially distance and celebrate the Eucharist in person. We were also able to offer Adoration and Reconciliation during this first semester. We knew that getting the students to campus for learning was important, but it was just as important for them to participate in Mass and have the opportunity to receive the Eucharist. We are grateful to our Diocesan priests who are so busy already but take the time to be here for our students

As St. Michael Warriors, we show deep respect for self and others. The precautionary steps that we have taken as a school have not been easy, but faculty and students continue to wear their face coverings and social distance in order to keep each other safe.

As St. Michael Warriors, we demonstrate creativity, independence and a constant thirst for knowledge. When the school was unable to hold events in the usual way, we had to get creative. Ceremonies that parents, grandparents and visitors usually attend were not able to happen as they have in the past. We were blessed to be able to live stream many of our events such as the Pin and Ring Ceremony, the Freshman Bible Ceremony, and the fall pep rally, so that parents and relatives, even those who live far away, were able to share in the joy of the events. Monthly Mass and Adoration have also been live streamed for all of our stakeholders to enjoy and to feel a part of the community.

Creativity was called for when the traditional service requirements became impossible due to the limitations of interactions between people. Campus Ministers worked with the Religion teachers to come up with an alternative plan which focused more on the act of service and less on the time spent doing the service. Students embraced the adjustment to the service program as they concentrated on being of service to those in need.

As a school community, we look to the future with great hope and confidence knowing that whatever challenges we face that we will face together with the grace of God and the strength of a Warrior.

Ellen Lee Principal



# The WARRIOR

## WARRIORS SERVE A DEVASTATED LAKE CHARLES

Hurricane Laura made landfall on August 27, 2020 in Cameron Parish as a Category 4 storm sustaining 150 mph winds. After the devastating effects of the storm settled in, the St. Michael family rallied together to help St. Louis Catholic High School in Lake Charles, La. St. Louis Catholic, along with many of the families who attend the high school, sustained much damage from Hurricane Laura. Students and faculty at St. Michael collected gift cards from Home Depot, Lowes, Walmart, Amazon, grocery stores, fast food restaurants, and gas stations raising over \$10,000 for the high school and their families. Along with the gift cards, students made personalized prayer cards to include notes of sorrow and encouragement.

In September, Coach Sanchez and the SMHS football parents spent the day in Lake Charles cooking and serving jambalaya and volunteering with cleanup efforts. While they were there, Coach Sanchez delivered the gift cards and prayer cards. "It was a humbling experience to see everyone so thankful for our help," he mentions. "Living in Louisiana, we all know the devastating effects that hurricanes can bring, so it felt good to give back to our neighbors in their time of need." The St. Michael football team added its own special touch to the efforts by directly donating \$1,100 as well to the football program at St. Louis Catholic.



Head football Coach, Joey Sanchez, bestows the donated items to Mia Orgeron, principal at St. Louis Catholic High School.

St. Michael students donated handwritten letters of encouragement along with gift cards for families in Lake Charles after Hurricane Laura.



# New Administrators ...

# Face an Extraordinary School Year



When Jack Nelson accepted the job as President of St. Michael High School in July of 2019, he had no idea the unusual obstacles he would face as the year 2020 approached. Having worked in Catholic schools for 26 years and as an administrator for 21, Nelson is well adept with management skills and knowledge of how the system works. However, with over 600 students and faculty returning to school during a worldwide pandemic, Nelson had to learn how to navigate a new position, at a new school, all while incorporating unprecedented safety protocol for an entire institution.

"For myself in particular, all of it has been new...then add the extra burden of COVID, preparing for the beginning of school in a whole different way. We were not able to do as many things in person as we would have liked," explains Nelson. "But we did what we had to do; preparing the school and all the facilities to get ready for the year and so far we have done an excellent job." While developing new policies and protocols for teachers and students, as well as keeping on top of all cleaning and cleaning supplies plus social distancing, Nelson says it has also been a challenge to keep the feeling of camaraderie alive. "The biggest challenge was trying to feel like you are able to build that community and keep that community feeling when current circumstances will not allow for it."

Nelson is familiar with the importance of community to the Catholic schools in Baton Rouge. As the former principal of St. George School for 12 years, he increased enrollment and improved campus life for teachers and students. He is also a pillar for the formation of students in Catholic education, believing that the addition of Catholicism to curriculum not only helps develop the whole student, but also builds the Kingdom of God within our society. "I believe that without the faith formation and everything our faith can bring to the educational enterprise, it would be bland. Anyone who works at a Catholic school can tell you that it is also about building the Kingdom of God, and that our work is for the greater Glory of God," he emphasizes.

Nelson's journey within the Catholic school system began in Washington, where he was born and raised. Later in life, he attended college at Eastern Washington University with the intent of becoming a teacher. However, after his dislike for a teaching internship with a high school, he changed course and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Communications. Nelson then spent a few years in the business field but eventually made the choice to return to his original calling. "Much of it became a family choice," he explains. "I was gone a lot and my oldest daughter was very young at the time, and I did not get to see her much. I missed that time with family." Nelson returned to school to obtain his degree in education and where he has remained ever since, eventually making his way out of the classroom and into administration for the next 20 years.

Now, in his 21st year as an administrator, albeit first year as a President, Nelson remains more optimistic than ever about St. Michael's future endeavors, even in the face of a pandemic. "The future at this school is bright; the foundation is phenomenal. We need to share the good news about what is going on with St. Michael with the broader Baton Rouge community. We are the only co-ed Catholic High School in the city, and it gives us a unique position to meet the needs of families in Baton Rouge."

Nelson has been married for 35 years and has three children, Katie, Connor, and Emily. When he is not busy spending time with his family, you can find him traveling to different ski resorts or refereeing high school football games.

Jack Nelson is not the only new administrative face around St. Michael's campus this school year. Joining the Warrior family as the Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction is Baton Rouge native, Kevin Landry. Landry joined forces with Nelson over the summer of 2020 with an extensive background in classroom teaching, as well as expertise in educational technology and standardized test prep.

Fresh out of college, Landry worked as a commercial banker while coaching high school soccer on the side. Eventually, his love for coaching surpassed his financial finesse, and he accepted a job as the head soccer coach at Catholic High School, where he also became a math teacher.

It was during these years that an unshakable seed was planted into Landry's head. "I always wanted to get into administration. During my third year of teaching at Catholic, Greg Brandao told me he thought I would make a good principal one day. After that, it never left my mind as something that I wanted to do," he shares.

After six years at Catholic High School, and another brief stint in the financial world, Landry made his way to St. Joseph's Academy, where he taught multiple math courses, as well as AP economics for 12 years. It was during this time that he had the opportunity to begin developing a standardized test prep company as well as obtain his master's degree in educational technology. However, the words of Brandao had stuck with Landry, and when the St. Michael position presented itself, Landry knew it was the right fit. "God works in mysterious ways," he muses. "I had applied for a different position in the dioceses and did not get it. But I must have made enough of an impression because they called St. Michael and told them to interview me. Doors always open and close based on where God wants you to end up. I got to St. Michael, and I knew it was meant to be just because I immediately felt like myself here."

Of course, joining the St. Michael administrative team during the middle of a pandemic was something new for Landry as well, but he took it in stride. "I like big challenges, and this was a big problem to solve so I made as many suggestions as I could. Right away I began working on all the protocols...from a mathematical perspective, it was fitting for my brain," he says. "It was a big job to tackle but it gave me something to do as soon as I started here while I was stepping into a new role and navigating those new responsibilities."

Landry, like Nelson, shares big goals for St. Michael even through this adverse time. As a short-term substitute teacher for Algebra II this year, Landry said he saw the potential of St. Michael students instantly. "Pushing those kids to higher level thinking and getting them to do the hard work; I was very happy with their response to it," he shares. One of Landry's main goals is for St. Michael to become a Blue-Ribbon Certified school. The National Blue-Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence. "A large component of that is standardized test scores. Luckily, that is my expertise. I know through experience that with the right prep and hard work, you can raise your ACT scores."

Implemented in January was school wide ACT program. Beginning with the junior class, a diagnostic test was completed along with a skills report, the results of which will filter down into the curriculum throughout the next few years.

Another idea brought to the table by Landry was beginning a PSAT program on campus, identifying 11 of the top standardized test-taking students to train to become National Merit Semifinalist. His goal with them? Have a least half qualify as National Merit Scholars within the next year.

"I think we have big things ahead of us," he mentions in closing. "There is a great base here to do something special. I am excited for the next few years."

Meanwhile, make sure to check out Landry's test taking tips found in the monthly SMHS newsletters (emailed and posted to the website). He writes about the test taking process, helpful test prep ideas, and useful resources for parents and students.





# Two Retired Teachers LEAVE MARK on Multiple Generations of Warriors

Many people dream of and wait for the day they can retire from their jobs. But, not everyone is lucky enough to find their calling through their career. Fortunately for St. Michael, two beloved teachers found their vocation in high school teaching and dedicated a combined 53 years here to countless students.

When former religion teacher, Mr. Ken Timmreck thinks back to finding his path to teaching, he recounts several different avenues presented to him along the way. From serving in the military to working as a booking sergeant at the state prison, Mr. Timmreck claims the best job he ever had was teaching. "I have never had a better job than teaching," he shares. "And I have done a lot of jobs in my life. I used to joke to my students about counting down the days until summer ends just because I would miss them so much." Mr. Timmreck is no stranger to humor. Ask any of his former students what they remember most, and they will tell you it is his one-of-a-kind personality. Whether it was standing in the hallway trying to convince the freshman to go to the wrong room or using his well know catch phrases, Mr. Timmreck refused to take life too seriously in the classroom. "I had fun with it all. Humor was at the forefront of 99% of what I did and how I taught," he explains.

Although it took a while for Mr. Timmreck to find his way into teaching, his wife and former SMHS math teacher, Mrs. Karen Timmreck, recounts a more straightforward journey for herself. "I knew I wanted to become a teacher in high school. At first, I wanted to teach history. Then I changed my mind and decided to major in math at LSU,"



she recalls. "After that, I ended up taking my old high school math teacher's place at Redemptorist and spent the next 20 years there." Eventually, Mrs. Timmreck made her way to St. Michael through the suggestion of a friend. She even played a role in encouraging her husband to become a teacher at St. Michael. "They were looking for a religion teacher the year I took the Algebra II position, so I suggested he go back to school and get his master's degree," she remembers. Having met Mr. Timmreck on a blind date a few years into her teaching career, they are still together 30 years later and still consider each other best friends. "We respect each other and each other's opinions. We are partners and best friends. You have to marry your best friend," Mr. Timmreck explains. "I also like to call her my bride because I want to remember the day we met. I like to keep the spark alive," he jokes.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Timmreck stress the importance of the relationship not only between each other, but also between a teacher and his/her students. They can agree that the best part of teaching is watching students grow more confident and learn that they can do anything they set their minds to. "I always wanted to help every single student," emphasizes Mrs. Timmreck. "I made sure there was time to let the lesson sink in and I made sure students knew they could stop me and ask a question at any point."

For Mr. Timmreck, there was another significant part to becoming a successful teacher. His secret was praying the rosary during his off hour each day at school. "During the first 10 years of teaching, I taught the way most teachers do; you love the kids and you do the best you can. But then I started saying the rosary every day during my off hour. It completely changed my teaching in that it helped me realize that these are His kids, not just kids. Any of them who are struggling, it just means that a teacher has not reached them yet. There is never a reason to be upset with a student acting out. There is a lot that we do not see and a lot that we do not know about each child," he explains.

Now during their first few months into retirement, Mr. and Mrs. Timmreck keep busy with family and camping trips. They enjoy spending time with grandchildren and have plans to continue to travel to places like Alaska and Big Bend State Park. But do not discount Mr. Timmreck's retirement too quickly. On the right day, you will still catch him in a St. Michael classroom as a substitute teacher.



# The WARRIOR

## Serve Like Christ



### Holiday Wreaths

In campus ministry, St. Michael students volunteered their time to make holiday wreaths for the residents at Old Jefferson Nursing home. Senior Brian Dang delivered the wreaths as part of his focus on the care of the elderly for his Senior Social Justice Project. Pictured here with the wreaths are seniors Sara Levron, Jenna Monette, and Brayden Burleigh.

### Religion Class Drive

During the month of November, St. Michael religion classes collected donations by class for several charities. The freshman contributed canned goods to make Thanksgiving baskets for those in need. Sophomores collected items for residents at Old Jefferson Nursing Home. Juniors made "love bags" for the homeless for the Missionaries of Charity. And the seniors made care bags for moms and babies in need at Woman's Hospital. After school on the day the items were delivered, students also had the opportunity to pray the rosary together for all those who would receive the gifts.



### Annual Live 2 Serve Toy Drive

Every year around Christmas, St. Michael faculty and students collect toys for the underserved children in Baton Rouge through the nonprofit, Live 2 Serve. The organization is run by Emily Titus '18, who got involved with Live 2 Serve during her junior year at St. Michael. The organization's mission is to make the city of Baton Rouge and the world a better place by addressing problems like child poverty.





# St. Michael Athletics

## M Reap Success

### Senior Heather Abadie signed her college letter of intent to pole vault at Texas A&M University

Originally a gymnast, Abadie grew up training at multiple gyms in the area throughout her elementary and middle school years. After witnessing some childhood friends make the switch from gymnastics to pole vaulting, Abadie decided to see what all the hype was about. "At my first indoor track meet freshman year of high school I saw some girls I knew from gym, and they were pole vaulting. My mom asked me if I wanted to try it, so I did," she shares. Shortly after that meet, Abadie took up pole vaulting, working her way to the top with ease.

Abadie's mom, Donald, a former LSU track star and Olympian, mentions that her daughter has always possessed the gift of athleticism. "She has been an athlete since she was little. She was a high level gymnast, ran cross country and was always a top finisher. Then, I taught her how to hurdle and encouraged her to pole vault," she says.

One of Abadie's biggest accomplishments includes holding the highest pole vault jump in Louisiana. Her height, at 13 feet and 4 inches, is not only the top jump for girls' high school pole vaulters in the state, but also the third best jump in the nation. With this achievement, she also received the Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track and Field Athlete of the Year



Heather and her family smile excitedly during her signing ceremony held in November. Heather's mom, Donald, also ran track in college and represented Canada in the 1992 Olympics as well as numerous world championships.

honor last summer. The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Abadie as Louisiana's best high school girls track & field athlete.

Abadie maintains that a key factor in her success is the support she receives from her gym coaches and her St. Michael track and field coaches. "I started practicing pole vaulting outside of school so when I joined the St. Michael team, all my coaches worked with me and my schedule and programs," she shares.

Her gym coach, Shane Leleux, says Heather's success in pole vaulting is imminent. "Heather is a tenacious pole vaulter," says Leleux. "Her work ethic, her consistency and just being a real student of the game sets her apart from most. She always comes to practice to work. With her signing with an SEC school her level of competition will be great and that will help her because she strives on big competition. All she has to do is keep on improving each day and stay healthy, and I could see her being in national winners conversations in the future."

Meanwhile, Abadie continues to focus on her senior year athletically and academically and says she looks forward to becoming a student athlete in College Station in the fall of 2021.

# The WARRIOR

### Senior Rebecca Quebedeaux signs with Louisiana Tech University

Cross country and track and field standout, Rebecca Quebedeaux, signed her college letter of intent with Louisiana Tech University in December.

Quebedeaux is a multi-event athlete in the track and field world, competing in a range of events from the 800m and 3200m, to the 3-miler in cross country. Beginning at a young age, Quebedeaux found her interest in running through following in the footsteps of her older sister. "The reason I started cross country is because my older sister signed up for it in the 5th grade. So, I started practicing with them as a 4th grader at MBS and when one of the older girls quit, I was able to join the team and compete. I've been running ever since," she explains.

Since her elementary years, Quebedeaux has grown tremendously as an athlete. In cross country, Rebecca has secured numerous top 10 finishes. She is a 4-time All-Metro athlete and 3-time All-State qualifier as well as a school record holder and 2020 team captain. In track and field she is a regional champion in the 800m as well as the 4 x 800m relay. Quebedeaux credits her success to outstanding coaching and love for the sport. "It's fun to push yourself and it is a

great way to relieve stress. It clears my mind," she shares. "I have also been lucky to have great coaches along the way." St. Michael track and field head coach, Zach Leger, praises Quebedeaux for her work ethic and high standards. "Rebecca is a high caliber, top level athlete that strives to compete at her best in all that she does. Regardless of what her goal is, Rebecca is always pushing herself to be better. She is a team player and is one of our most respected athletes," he shares.

Quebedeaux's accomplishments do not end on the field. Having taken 16

Advanced Placement, Honor and Dual Enrollment courses throughout her 4-year high school career, Quebedeaux has maintained a 4.5 GPA. She is also a St. Michael ambassador and a member of the beta club. When she is not practicing her running, you can find her creating homemade jewelry for her small startup called "Rebeccaearrings" on Instagram.

Quebedeaux says she looks forward to becoming a collegiate athlete in Ruston and pushing her running to the next level. She plans to major in biomedical engineering and eventually wants to design prosthetics for amputees.



Cross country star Rebecca Quebedeaux, poses with the runner-up trophy after the 2020 state meet, where she was also top 10 finisher. Rebecca served as a team captain her senior year and holds the school record for running 3 miles in 18 minutes and 31 seconds.



# St. Michael Athletics

## Reap Success

### Boys Basketball Team Holds Strong with 11-3 Season Record into Spring



The St. Michael boys' basketball team began their 2020-21 season with a 9-game win streak, proving to be one of the best all-around teams the school has seen in years. With only a few losses thus far from in-season games, Head Coach, Drew Hart, credits his team's success to consistency and work ethic. "There are so many things that go into the success of a team, it's hard to pinpoint one," he says. "This team has shown the willingness to work extremely hard and compete every day at practice. They are unselfish players, and they learn from their mistakes and possess a winning attitude."

Coach Hart also stresses the importance of understanding that every practice and each game, needs to be taken day by day. "We do not take anything for granted because we understand that our season could come to an abrupt halt due to COVID, or a player could suffer an injury," he mentions. "We just have to continue to grow, stay healthy, and stay humble."

Along with a successful season on the court as a team, senior standout Lance Williams, captured a momentous achievement in joining the exclusive 1,000-point club. Since 1991, only 10 other players in the history of St. Michael basketball have accomplished this feat. Many went on to play collegiate basketball and one player (Jacob Evans '15), currently plays professionally for the New York Knicks. As this publication went to print, Williams had just exceeded the 1,000-point milestone during his four-year high school career, already capturing his goal with more room for growth. The defensive MVP and All-District player praises his coach and his team for leading him down a successful path. "As a team, we just enjoy the game. We love to play, it feels great to win, and we like putting on a good show for our fans," he explains. "And Coach Hart is always pushing us to play our best." Williams hopes to sign with either Presentation College, Bellevue, or Xavier University in the spring.



Defensive MVP and college prospect Lance Williams, closely guards #3 on Parkview Baptist's team. The Warriors defeated the Eagles 74 to 47.



Anthony Igiede makes an assist during the game against Denham Springs.



# The WARRIOR

## Soccer Holiday Cup Tradition Continues



The Holiday cup was created in honor of #5 Jared Adcock, who passed away from an undiagnosed heart condition during his junior year at St. Michael.



Held every year around Christmas, the purpose of the Holiday Cup is to raise awareness for congenital heart issues amongst student athletes. The tournament style cup

began in 2009 after St. Michael soccer player, Jared Adcock, passed away from an undiagnosed heart condition the summer before his junior year. Knowing Jared's love for soccer, his mom, Lottie, asked Paul Fletcher (the boys' head coach at the time) to put together a tournament to honor her son and raise awareness for undiagnosed heart conditions. Paul warmly welcomed the idea, and so the Holiday Cup was born.

"I mentioned it to Paul right after the funeral, and he took to the idea without hesitation. It started out with about 8 teams but has grown tremendously to the largest soccer tournament in the state, for boys and girls now, too," mentions Lottie. "Jared loved soccer and playing in tournaments. He was always talking about how the team could use more funding, so creating this tournament was the perfect tribute to him."

Shortly after, in 2011, the Louisiana Pediatric Cardiology Foundation created a program called "Save a Heart, Save a Life" in order to offer free screenings for student athletes in the Baton Rouge community. Angelle Bourgeois, SMHS parent and director of the LPCF, stresses the importance of these preventative screenings, explaining that over 3,000 American children die each year from playing sports with an undiagnosed heart condition. "We look for conditions that young kids and teenagers do not know they have. Each child receives an EKG as well as an Echo test which are sent to our cardiologist who reads the results for free," she shares. "Since 2011, we have screened over 1,650 St. Michael students, and we now provide information at the Holiday Soccer Cup to help spread the awareness of the importance of getting screened."

Preventative heart screening is now mandatory for participation in any extracurricular at St. Michael High School. You can find more information about heart screenings for children in the Baton Rouge area here <https://www.lpcf.com/>.



## Boys and Girls Cross Country Teams Claim Runner-Up Titles

In November, the St. Michael boys and girls cross country teams claimed the Louisiana 4A State Champion Runner-Up titles. The meet took place in Natchitoches, Louisiana. The girls competed against 11 different teams and the boys were up against 16 teams. Rebecca Quebedeaux, Dawson Latona, Zachary Edwards and Joshua Breaux were all top 10 finishers.







..... **SMHS Begins New Theater Program** .....

At the beginning of the 2020 school year, St. Michael High School furthered its curriculum with the addition of Theater I classes. The newly implemented courses, taught by Mrs. Sonya Blanchard, are just the first step toward building the drama and theater programs on campus.

Theater I covers everything from improv and pantomime, to scene performance and script writing. In addition, Blanchard's classes are learning the real-world applications and benefits of taking theater in high school. "Theater class is much more than just putting on a play. Students learn things such as the importance of making eye contact, public speaking, and working as team. It also builds confidence. These are things they can apply in everyday life, during interviews, and during other situations outside of school. I want my students to understand that there are real world applications here," she stresses.

Blanchard, whose background is in choreography and dance, as well as theater, has big plans in the upcoming years for the SMHS theater and drama departments. Her first goal is to have each of her theater classes do a small performance at the end of this school year. "My

hope is that each of my classes will have the opportunity to perform in front of an audience this year. We will have to see how it works out with COVID, but I would like to see each class do small plays separately, and then follow those small performances with a big play by the drama club."

With a course proposal for Theater II in the works, Blanchard is hoping to recruit a group who will be serious, yet comfortable performing in front of a variety of audiences. "I think the students who have taken Theater I this year will know if they like it. So once they join Theater II next year, I know they will be serious about their performances," says Blanchard. "Ideally, I would like to use Theater II as a kind of recruiting tool and put on plays for some of the local elementary schools."

Blanchard notes that she realized her passion for theater and acting at an early age when she began taking dance lessons as a child. "My favorite part was performing. And even though I did not know much about theater then, I do remember my favorite shows to watch on T.V. were the ones with songs and dancing." Hoping to share this longtime passion with her students, Blanchard says she also aims to eventually incorporate a choral program as well.

**Senior Caroline Simpson  
Interns with the  
Coroner's Office**

*Caroline  
Simpson*



In May of 2020, St. Michael senior Caroline Simpson began her summer internship with the Baton Rouge Coroner's Office. Although a little nervous at first, she found that the experience would positively shape her in unimaginable ways.

Having grown up with an interest in science, Simpson says what really sparked her curiosity was reading a series of fiction books called *I Hunt Killers* by Barry Lyga during her elementary years. "The main character in these books was all about forensics and so I realized I wanted to go explore this profession as much as I could," she shares.

Simpson's passion was soon supported by her family when her father, Bill, bid on the opportunity to "Spend the Day with the Coroner" at the St. Jean Vianney Gala during Simpson's 8th grade year. From that moment on, Simpson was sold. "He won it, so I went for that day and was able to see an autopsy. After that I remember thinking 'I love this!' and so over this past summer when I found out there was a spot for an intern with the Coroner, I jumped on the opportunity." Simpson's duties at the Coroner's office included everything from sharp and blunt dissection, identifying and weighing organs, assisting with forensic photography, and assisting with documentation of the case.

Simpson admits that it was not always easy; she experienced some hesitancy going into her first few days in the office. "At first I was very nervous because I did not know if I would get emotional or upset. But my faith in God helped me understand that these people were not there anymore...their soul was gone but their bodies remained. So it made me feel almost more trustful in God...knowing that our reason on Earth is to eventually

end up in Heaven. A lot of people would think of death as despair, but it's kind of hopeful in that sense."

Taking classes like Forensics and Biology at St. Michael also allowed Simpson to delve further into her passion. "It is really cool to learn about how science and law meet in my Forensics class. I also took Biology which helped me understand the basics, and then to build off that with the internship over this past summer was really nice. Now I am in Biology II taking my knowledge even further and building off that."

The Baton Rouge Coroner, Dr. Beau Clark, who is also a Warrior alumnus, praises Simpson for her professionalism during the summer internship and says his staff enjoyed working with her. "She handled all her duties professionally and with great respect. She was very energetic about her job and always willing to help. She is a very ambitious young woman and will succeed in her future endeavors," Dr. Clark remarks.

Looking back on the summer, Simpson says her favorite part of the job was having the opportunity to learn how the whole process works from start to finish, in concluding the cause of death for a person. "It was just very fascinating...not like anything I have ever done. Most people do not get to have this type of experience at 17," she says.

Simpson plans to major in pre-med at Millsaps, where she will be attending in the fall of 2021 on a soccer scholarship. She shares that her goal is to eventually graduate from medical school and become a forensic pathologist.



# Alumni Accomplishments



**Kristi Garcia Spinosa '91**

Kristi Garcia Spinosa '91 currently serves as the Director and General Counsel for the Louisiana District Attorneys' Retirement System. In her role, she is responsible for the effective implementation of agency laws and policies in order to provide a fiscally sound retirement plan for Louisiana prosecutors. Kristi graduated from the LSU College of Business, and the LSU Law Center. She is married to John Spinosa '93 and has three children, Grayson, Kathryn, and Abigail. Her two oldest children, Grayson and Kathryn, are St. Michael graduates as well.

**Victoria Patton '11**

Victoria Patton '11 earned her Doctor of Medicine in April from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, Louisiana. She will be doing her surgery residency at LSU Medical in New Orleans.

**Carley McCord '07**

Broadcaster Carley McCord '07 was named the recipient of Southland Conference's 2020 Louis Bonnette Sports Media Award in memoriam.



**Jaren Reimonenq '19**

Jaren Reimonenq '19 committed to play football at Belhaven University in Jackson, Mississippi in June of last year.



**Joshua Ambeau '12**

Joshua Ambeau '12 graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Josh is currently working as a physical therapist at Elliott Physical Therapy outside of Boston, MA.



**Jordan Dudley '15**

Jordan Dudley '15 had an important role in LSU's National Championship win as a student manager for the LSU Football Equipment department. Dudley kept the Tigers safe and looking their best on the field for each game for the past three years. He recently graduated from LSU in Business Management with a minor in Sociology.

**Jessica Lee '10**

Jessica Lee '10 earned her Master of Pastoral Studies, Theology in May from Loyola University in New Orleans.



**Richard Tuminello '14**

Richard Tuminello '14 graduated from LSU with a dual major in Physics and Mathematics. He received a University Medal for finishing summa cum laude with a GPA of 4.0 as well as an award from the LSU physics department for Outstanding Undergraduate Research. While at LSU, Richard played clarinet for the Tiger Marching Band, serving as clarinet section leader from 2017-2018. In August, Richard will begin the PhD program in aerospace engineering at Virginia Tech.

**Scott Michael Jarreau '14**

Scott Michael Jarreau '14 was named Teacher of the Year at St. Theresa Middle School in Gonzales.

**Hannah Kleinpeter '15**

Hannah Kleinpeter '15 recently completed the Lamar Governor's Fellowship Program. This program provides college and university students with an opportunity to experience public policy in action as they work in a cabinet-level agency. Hannah worked in communications for the Governor's Office in Baton Rouge, where she aided Gov. John Bel Edwards. She is currently a graduate research assistant with the LSU Department of Public Administration.



**Sydney Copeland '13**

Sydney Copeland '13 earned her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine last spring from Louisiana State University.



**Whitney Hamilton '18**

Whitney Hamilton '18 has been named the Gulf South Conference scholar athlete for 2020. She is majoring in Biology at the University of Montevallo where she is also on the women's tennis team.



**Elizabeth Coll '12**

Elizabeth Coll '12 graduated from Spring Hill College with a B.A. in graphic design. During her time at Spring Hill, she was the student president for the American Institute of Graphic Arts. After graduating, Elizabeth moved to Seattle, Washington where she is currently employed at Eastside Catholic School as their Marketing and Communications Associate.



## ALUMNI NEWS

### BABIES

- Molly Hart Montag '03 and husband Jordan, welcomed a baby girl, Ellie Marie on January 25, 2020.
- Chris Keagle '04 and Shelley Battaglia welcomed a baby boy, Nolan Christopher on January 27, 2020.
- Amanda King Rodrigue '05 and her husband, Kyle welcomed a baby girl, Blakely Elizabeth on August 17, 2020.
- Skyler Bourgeois Stegeman '09 and her husband Joseph welcomed a baby girl, Daisy Elizabeth on June 7, 2020.
- Christina Bergeron Hayes '10 and her husband welcomed a baby boy, Beckham Hayes on February 6, 2020.
- John Roberts Jr. '10 and wife Lexi, welcomed a baby girl, Gianna Marie on September 5, 2019.
- Rachel Deville Duet '11 and husband Cody, welcomed a baby girl, Sutton Rae on June 25, 2020.
- Taylor Broussard Thames '12 and husband Brett, welcomed a baby girl, Baylor Lyn on April 10, 2020.
- Allison Ballard Meyers '10 and husband Jeremy '10, welcomed a baby girl, Arabella on March 8, 2020.

### MARRIAGES

- Alexandra Byrd '10 married Jay Dias '09 on Saturday, August 29, 2020.
- Gabrielle Cosentino '11 married Vincent Diez Jr. on Friday, October 9, 2020.
- Emily Hazlip '14 married Cody Haese on Friday, September 11, 2020.
- Trenton Spinosa '16 married Katy Cook on Friday, July 31, 2020.

If you or someone you know has exciting alumni news, please contact our Alumni Coordinator, Khloe Page, at [kpage@smhsbr.org](mailto:kpage@smhsbr.org)

## Alumni Updates



### Alum Appointed CEO of B.R.A.S.S. Surgery Center

*Kimi Melancon Hart*



Kimi Melancon Hart, a 1992 graduate of St. Michael High School, has been named the Chief Executive Officer of the BRASS Surgery Center. Known as a multi-specialty ambulatory surgery center in Baton Rouge, BRASS offers post-op patients specialized care in an outpatient setting.

Realizing that she wanted to go into medicine as a senior in high school, Kimi attended nursing school at Our Lady of the Lake after acquiring her pre-rec classes through LSU. Upon becoming a registered nurse, Kimi spent 20 years at the Woman's Hospital in the transition nursery unit before taking on her roll as CEO of BRASS in 2018.

As the CEO, Kimi covers all day to day operations of the facility. Not only does she lead all financial standpoints of the organization, but she also works in the clinical area as needed. "I love that I am part of all aspects of the facility. A lot of times a CEO has a finance or business background, not a clinical background," she explains. "But I think it is great that I come from clinicals and have been able to learn and develop the financial aspects of the job. I can see all arms of the facility and what makes it work best."

If you ask Kimi about her successful medical career, she credits St. Michael teachers for helping her develop a strong foundation early on. "I received an unbelievable amount of guidance from my teachers,

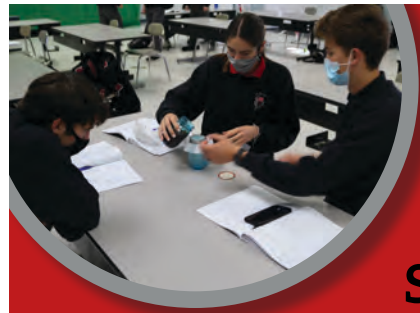
especially at St. Michael. They provided me with great direction in life and helped me find the right path for my personality," she shares. "Some of them are still there today. Looking back on it all, I cannot imagine myself in a different career, or not having gone to high school at St. Michael. It was like family. I grew up there."

Kimi's personal history with St. Michael goes deeper than just career development. She also met her husband, Drew Hart, during her freshman year. "We had a few classes together my freshman year and we became good friends, but we did not start dating until we were upperclassmen," she recalls.

Drew, who is also the St. Michael boys' head basketball coach, says he remembers Kimi as an athlete and was attracted to her vibrant personality. "We became really good friends right away," he explains. "We were both athletes and ran in the same groups, so I got to know her really well." Drew says his wife has always possessed leadership qualities that he admires. "She is super organized and has great leadership skills. She coached gymnastics all throughout high school and college, so she had the opportunity to build on those traits," he says. "She demands perfection but is very easy to work for and work with. I respect her for that."

Kimi and Drew got married in 1999. They have two boys; Dylan a 2020 SMHS graduate, and Cameron, a 7th grader at St. George School.





## Students Showcase Engineering Skills

St. Michael engineering students completed midterm projects before Christmas break. Engineering I students held a coffee competition complete with a taste test panel to determine who brewed the perfect cup of light coffee. Students discussed metrics to measure the coffee's quality, including conductivity, temperature and brew time. Using trial and error, as well as data analysis skills, students aimed to achieve a conductivity between 300 – 500 for their cup of joe to forego its bitterness.

Engineering II students completed a unit on physical therapy. This unit required students to use the full engineering design process taught in engineering I to develop a system that provides real-time feedback to physical therapy patients performing rehabilitation exercises. After analyzing user needs and creating a detailed functional model (skills also learned in engineering I), students designed and built a basic wearable device that allows a web camera to capture information about the range of motion of a joint. Students also wrote programs that analyze large quantities of video data. The program must apply an algorithm for calculating changing joint angles, provide real-time user feedback, and finally export the data to a file for later analysis by the patient's physical therapist. While the class would usually present their projects to physical and occupational therapists in real time, COVID restrictions do now allow for it this year. In their place, faculty attended for the presentations.

The engineering program at St. Michael High School is part of the *Engineer Your World* curriculum through the University of Texas at Austin. Developed by a team of UT faculty, NASA engineers, and secondary teachers, *Engineer Your World* is an innovative, student-centered curriculum that engages learners in authentic engineering experiences and inspires them to embrace an engineer's habits of mind. Collaborative, student-directed projects build resilient problem-solving skills and empower students to think like engineers, to adopt engineering processes, and to pursue engineering disciplines for the betterment of our world.

TOP PHOTO: Seniors Hayden Barnett and Rebecca Quebedeaux work with junior Alex Rodrigue to create their light brew coffee.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Seniors Cole Foret, Halle Yu, and Michael (Drew) Seelbach, show off their physical therapy devices after their presentations. Cole centered his project around elbows, Halle covered wrists, and Drew worked on knees.



## Homecoming Celebration

Charlotte Balart and Quinlan Reed were dubbed the 2020 SMHS Homecoming Queen and King in November at the St. Michael football game versus Tara. Charlotte, a graduate of St. George School, was also chosen as St. Michael's 2020-21 student of the year.

## Student Traditions

Students enjoy the annual tradition of sweatpants and no shave week after Thanksgiving break.

Following a week of comfy dress, students and faculty donned their most festive Christmas sweaters while enjoying holiday music from the Warrior band. Seniors were able to attend the annual Christmas concert in person while the rest of the student body watched and listened through a live stream.



# The WARRIOR

## ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC RAISES RECORD FUNDS



The 31st Annual Warrior Golf Classic was held Monday, November 9 at Greystone Country Club. This annual event raises funds to help support SMHS athletic teams, clubs, and extracurricular programs. This year, thanks to the generosity of over 50 teams and over 120 sponsors, the event successfully raised over \$56,000. We want to again thank all our teams, sponsors, volunteers, and players for being an integral part of the success of our Warrior Family.

Anna Heine, pictured here with her team, won the closest to the pin and longest drive contest.

Brothers Kyle ('04) and Jared ('07) Purgatorio pose with their teams before tee-off at the Warrior Golf Classic.



### Special Thanks to our Major Sponsors:

Cypress Title, LLC, Ice House Tap Room, Izzo's Illegal Burrito, The Larson Family, The Eddie Rispono Family Foundation, EBS/Court Call, Walk-On's Sports Bistreaux, The Stablier Foundation, Pelican Craft Brands, Cajun Catering, Chick-fil-a, Community Coffee, Coca-Cola, and Ruffino's

### Congratulations to All the Winners:

Overall 1st Place Team: Cole Permenter, Justin LeBlanc, and Brad Schaeffer

Closest to the Pin and Longest Drive: Anna Heine

1st Place Putting Contest: Joey Indest



# Message from Advancement



“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” – 2 Corinthians 9:7

Throughout this difficult year, which will undoubtedly live on as one of the most challenging, St. Michael High School has persevered to deliver an outstanding education to our students. Last March, after the shutdown of our school we quickly adapted to a remote learning environment, completed the school year and even held a graduation ceremony through a combination of virtual and live platforms.

In August of 2020, we began our 36th school year with determination and resolve. We resumed in-person instruction with new procedures, new routines, and a positive attitude, hoping to combat COVID-19 as best we can.

As Catholics and Christians, we are people of good news; the literal translation of the word “gospel.” We are also people of hope. This embodies our work at St. Michael High School as we develop our 617 students into positive role models in society through excellent academics and solid Christian values.

With an “attitude of gratitude” we look toward our bright future even in times of uncertainty. We continue to do everything possible to live out our mission to foster the spiritual, intellectual, and personal development of young people as committed disciples of Christ. With our ever-changing world, we need to adapt quickly to the reality of our current situations. **Now more than ever, our students and their families need us. And we need you.**

Please consider supporting the important work at St. Michael the Archangel High School by making a gift to the St. Michael Warrior Fund. In times like this, we are reminded of how interconnected we all are. Thank you for already playing a huge role in our St. Michael Family. We look forward to forging ahead this year with grace and resolve but without you, none of it is possible.

God bless,  
**Mr. Jack Nelson**      **Mrs. Ellen Lee**  
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