
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026



St. Francis of Assisi
—— CATHOLIC SCHOOL



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EDITOR: LORETTA FRASCA, CLASS OF 2025

NOTE FROM PRINCIPAL JULIE PRITZEL CLASS OF 1994



Dear St. Francis Alum,

Thank you for being a Mustang! We are pleased to introduce a new newsletter for alumni, written by one of our young alums. In this issue, we celebrate the very core of what it means to be a member of this special community. We celebrate our faith, academic excellence, athletic achievements, and a heart for others. As a member of the class of 1994, I join you in cheering “Go, Mustangs!”

Send story ideas to alumni@stfrancisaa.org.

Best,

Julie Pritzel

THE CLASS OF 1976 CELEBRATES THEIR 50TH REUNION

Fifty years after graduating from St. Francis of Assisi, alumna Maria Callaghan brought members of the class of 1976 back together this past spring. For Callaghan, the event was more than simply seeing classmates after many years. It was an opportunity to reconnect with people who shared some of the most formative years of their lives together.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIA CALLAGHAN

This idea first came to Callaghan after attending high school reunions at Father Gabriel Richard and wondering if the same thing could happen at St. Francis. After not seeing many classmates in decades, Callaghan decided to organize one herself.

“I thought about a class reunion for years, and so many times I told myself not to do it because maybe it wouldn’t work out or maybe no one would come,” she said.

Fortunately, Callaghan didn't let fear stop her and the reunion was a huge success. She said fifteen of her classmates attended, as well as a few classmates from the graduating classes of '75 and '77. One of the best parts of the reunion for Callaghan was how quickly old memories returned. "We started sharing memories right away and everyone seemed genuinely happy to be together," Callaghan said.

Even after so many years, the classmates share a lasting bond, said Callaghan. "We share a lot of the same memories and values, and there's still a real sense of camaraderie and affection between classmates."



**“...THERE’S STILL A REAL
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 CLASSMATES.”**

One lasting memory of Callaghan's was the graduation ceremony, "We were all there together, and there was this sense that we were looking around at people we had known for so many years, but that some of us might not see each other again for a very long time."

For any St. Francis alumni considering organizing a reunion for their class, Callaghan's advice is simple: "Just do it."

SPOTLIGHT ON A SFA ATHLETE: RACHEL SPRAUER CLASS OF 2021



PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL SPRAUER

Being a collegiate athlete while balancing classes is no easy feat, but SFA 2021 alumna Rachel Sprauer embraces the challenge. Sprauer attends Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where she competes in Track and Field.

Sprauer's love for track started at SFA. She also ran cross country in 6th and 7th grade.

She says she discovered her favorite distance at SFA, and by accident. Her 6th grade relay team was mistakenly entered into the 4x400m race, which became an opportunity. "My first 400m race was at St. Francis and I realized I loved running then," Sprauer said.

**“MY FIRST 400M RACE WAS
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SPRAUER**



PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL SPRAUER

While competition is a big part of collegiate track, one of Sprauer’s favorite parts of the sport is her teammates. Some of her best memories happened off the track, and for Sprauer that includes playing charades with her fellow athletes.

As Sprauer looks ahead to the rest of her college career, she continues to build on the lessons she first learned at St. Francis – those of working hard, supporting her teammates, and embracing every opportunity that comes her way.

Her story is a testament to what can happen when talent is matched with determination, and the St. Francis community is proud to watch one of its own continue to grow both on the track and in the classroom.

MUSTANGS RAISING MUSTANGS

ALUMNI: MATT MILLER 1995



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATT MILLER

“It has been a true pleasure watching my son and daughter grow and mature at St. Francis. As an alumnus, returning to SFA as a parent has been special. We were a Mustang family when I was growing up and we still appreciate those great teachers and strong Catholic education.

What stands out even more to me now is the amazing sense of community at St. Francis. It is truly second to none. While the hallways and classrooms feel a little smaller than they once did, the heart of St. Francis feels just as big as ever. I feel very blessed to have our kids at SFA and am grateful for the current teachers and staff providing such a wonderful experience for our whole family. “ – Matt Miller

ALUMNI: ANNA JILEK-ALLEN CLASS OF 2000



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNA JILEK-ALLEN

“We send our kids to St. Francis so that they would experience the same close-knit and supportive community I experienced. It has been wonderful watching them enjoy this atmosphere and the amazing teachers and staff. It feels like a family and it is special seeing them develop these relationships with their friends and those around them.”

ALUMNI: EILEEN WHIPPLE CLASS OF 2000

“As an alum, it is such a cool experience having my kids attend St. Francis. I loved my time at SFA and getting to share the teachers and extended community with my kids is pretty special. It’s also pretty special that there are alumni that love this school and the kids so much that they come back to teach. I’m so thankful my kids are Mustangs!”



PHOTO COURTESY OF EILEEN WHIPPLE

SFA TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: MRS. DALIAN



Most people have a specific teacher they remember from their early elementary days. One who is supportive or extra kind, or memorable in some fashion. For many SFA alumni, that special person is fourth grade teacher Maura Dalian.

Mrs. Dalian has been teaching for over 40 years and counting at St. Francis. She has taught countless alumni including multiple current teachers and parents, and even our current St. Francis principal, Mrs. Pritzel. Mrs. Dalian shared that from an early age she knew her future , “Since I was seven, I knew I wanted to be a teacher, “ she said. “I used to play school with my sisters. I feel like teaching picked me. I didn't pick it.”

Mrs. Dalian has started and continued many of the long-lasting traditions at St. Francis including the annual fourth grade play, which she often writes herself. She's published numerous children's books, including the recent "Trouble in Toothwinkle" and "The Wizard Woke Up Late." The operation is a family affair, with her daughter Caili Dalian as the illustrator.

**"I FEEL LIKE
TEACHING
PICKED ME.
I DIDN'T PICK IT,"
– MRS. DALIAN**



She says she continues to find teaching rewarding and maybe one day will get to "...teach the kids of my students as a grand-teacher."



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