



SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE FOUNDED 1904

May 2023 eNews

Congratulations, Class of 2023!



*Check out the 116th Commencement recap video created by Patrick Bohan,
Director of the Media Creation Studio.*

Hello, Saint Michael's Community–

Spring has sprung on campus, with the hint of summer days just around the corner. As the semester wrapped up, skis were replaced with frisbees and winter coats were packed away as shorts and flip-flops made their debut. The campus

sunshine was welcomed by students, faculty, and staff, after a long winter and the completion of another wonderful academic year.

As the campus blossoms in the warm weather, it feels especially welcoming for me as the new Director of Alumni & Family Engagement. From my first day in April to today, the warmth and inclusivity of the St. Mike's community has made each of my days here better than the last. I have spent my first weeks exploring campus and meeting as many people as I can, quickly learning that I am lucky to be a part of such a vibrant and special place.

I was also pleased to celebrate with all of the families and friends that arrived on campus this month for commencement. I was able to witness the joy and celebration of each graduate as they embark on their post-college career with the goal of living a purposeful life to make a positive impact in the world. The vision of Saint Michael's is "*Do Well and Do Good*," and we know these promising young people will achieve both as our newest alumni. Congratulations, Class of 2023!

Next, we look forward to welcoming our alumni back to campus for Reunion weekend this June 2 – 4th. This year we are celebrating the 3s and 8s class years, and look forward to recognizing the Class of 1973 as Golden Knights. If you're interested in joining us and experiencing the joy of reconnecting with old friends and making new ones, please visit smcvt.edu/reunion. Enjoy one of the best times of year in Vermont, at one of the best places in Vermont-- Saint Michael's College. I look forward to getting to know many of you as we celebrate Reunion 2023!

Cheers,

Stephanie Snell
Director of Alumni & Family Engagement
ssnell2@smcvt.edu



Saint Michael's College grants diplomas to 320 undergraduates, 40 graduate students during 116th Commencement exercises

Approximately 320 students received bachelor's degrees and 40 received master's degrees during Saint Michael's College's 116th Commencement ceremony on Sunday, May 14th, in the College's Ross Sports Center. The

undergraduates in the Class of 2023 represented 20 states and 10 countries, and the graduate students represented 10 states and seven countries. Four students in the undergraduate class had 4.0 cumulative grade point averages. Jay Bellissimo '87, the Chief Operating Officer at Vonage and current member of the Board of Trustees for the College, delivered the Commencement address to the graduates and gave three pieces of advice: have "fire in the belly," don't be afraid to fail and learn from those failures, and lean into faith. "You are a remarkable and resilient class," President Lorraine Sterritt said, giving her final Commencement remarks as President of the College. "You have persevered through many challenges: those you expected to face and many that were unexpected for all of us. You will be able to tell your children and your grandchildren about how you attended college during a pandemic and how you kept going through thick and thin. We are immensely proud of you and all that you achieved."

Alumni Spotlight: Jay Bellissimo '87 delivers 116th Commencement address, receives honorary degree

"Whatever your North Star is, just remember – this is your time, this is your narrative, this is your opportunity to be who you want to be and to make your mark in life," Jay Bellissimo '87, the 116th Commencement speaker, told the graduates of the Saint Michael's Class of 2023 on Sunday, May 14th. Bellissimo '87, Chief Operating Officer of Vonage and a former hockey star for the Purple Knights who currently serves on the College's Board of Trustees, also received an honorary degree from the College. Bellissimo has spent most of his 30-year career in the technology industry. He is a respected thought leader in business strategy and transformation, has been responsible for multibillion-dollar initiatives and has lectured around the world on Artificial Intelligence, including presenting at MIT twice on the impact of AI in business, government, and society. Jay holds a B.A. in Political Science from Saint Michael's College. As an alumnus, he served on his 15th Reunion Committee and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in 1995. At the time of his induction, Jay was the hockey program's all-time leading scorer. Congratulations, Jay!





Escobedo '23 earns prestigious Fairbanks Award, delivers student remarks at 116th Commencement

On Sunday, May 14th, women's soccer captain Katie Escobedo '23 was recognized with the Katherine Fairbanks Memorial Award, one of Saint Michael's College's two major senior awards, after delivering her remarks as the student body-selected undergraduate class speaker. Sunday capped an eventful four-day stretch of garnering accolades for Escobedo, who was recognized with the Donald Sutton Community Service Award on Thursday, May 11th for her service to Saint Michael's Fire and Rescue before landing the institution's NCAA Woman of the Year accolade on Friday at the Department of Athletics' 76th annual Block 'M' Senior Awards Banquet. A psychology and sociology double major, with a minor in business administration, Escobedo carried a cumulative 3.94 grade-point average into the spring semester. On the soccer pitch, Escobedo was 16th in the nation in goals-against average (0.60) and 18th in save percentage (.864) last fall, setting a school record in GAA while leading the Northeast-10 Conference with a school-record-tying eight shutouts. She was an Admission intern and tour guide, recently completed a Peace Corps Prep certificate program, and helped raise nearly \$30,000 for children facing cancer through last year's St. Baldrick's Foundation head shaving fundraiser. A standout in the classroom, Escobedo holds membership in the Chi Alpha Sigma (college athlete), Delta Epsilon Sigma (Catholic colleges), Phi Beta Kappa (liberal arts & sciences) and Psi Chi (psychology) national honor societies. Congratulations, Katie!

BBC interviews Jennifer Purcell of St. Mike's history faculty while in London for Coronation

Modern British historian Jen Purcell of the Saint Michael's history faculty was in London during the Coronation of King Charles on May 6th. She has been researching the British Royal Family for a book about the public's perception of the monarchy as part of the Bloomsbury Academic book series, *Mass-Observation Critical Series*. In an [interview with the BBC](#), Jen provided context to some of the Coronation's events and questions as the world watches the events unfolding in the United Kingdom, and she talked about why she went – to observe and study reactions of and celebrations by the British people as a new monarch is officially crowned. Jen comes on at about the hour and nine minute mark and speaks for about 10 minutes with the BBC host. Separately, Jen wrote a page for BBC Rewind on *Mass-Observation's* history.



Also, a story in *The New York Times* by reporter Megan Specia titled "[Camilla's path to becoming queen was a triumph of image transformation](#)" quotes Jen and mentions Saint Michael's in the third paragraph. Amazing work, Professor Purcell!



Outdoor classroom by Natural Area nearly complete, to be ready by fall

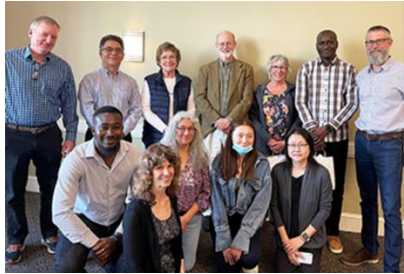
The new outdoor classroom by the Saint Michael's Natural Area alongside the Solar Array will be ready for fall classes, reports biology Professor Declan McCabe, chief steward of the Natural Area and one of the initiators of this building and permitting process. Recently on social media Declan shared these photos of progress on the now near-complete construction. As reported in this newsletter in a recent issue, related initiatives to the project are a new crosswalk between Hoehl Welcome Center entrance and the Merrill Cemetery as a safe spot to cross over Route 15 for anybody using the Natural Area — in place thanks to the efforts of former Public Safety Director Doug Babcock. Additionally, a student hopes to place a "time capsule" into the structure soon. "We intend to provide a single essential piece of instructional technology — there will be a dry erase board," says Declan.

Edmundite Missions bless a new Administration Center in Selma, AL

Good news from Selma! Reporter James Jones of *The Selma Times-Journal* covered the blessing of the new Edmundite Missions Administration Center in [an article published May 4th](#): "Under a bright sun and clear blue skies, Edmundite Missions President and CEO Chad McEachern '91 addressed the crowd that included Selma Mayor James Perkins Jr., Dallas County Sheriff Mike Granthum, Selma City Council President Billy Young, council members [and other city officials]. 'We're blessing a building that's been a long time in the making,' McEachern '91 said. McEachern '91 also praised the Edmundite Missions' staff for their hard work and dedication to the city of Selma and Dallas County. 'They don't sleep, they work,' McEachern said. 'We will never walk away from Selma.' McEachern added that the Bosco Nutrition Center served over 340,000 meals last year." Most Rev. Thomas J. Rodi, D.D., did the Blessing at the Entrance. Father Brian Cummings, S.S.E. '86, Chairman of the Board of Directors delivered The Love of Christ Impels Us. The Blessing before the Crucifix-Very was done by Rev. David Cray, S.S.E. '67, Superior General-Society of St. Edmund. The Blessing of the Legacy Wall was



done by Father Steve Hornat, S.S.E. '72, member of the board of directors and Pastor at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Selma.



Saint Michael's MATESOL professors present at conference; graduates celebrated

We All Belong: Vermont Statewide Conference on the Education of Immigrant and Refugee Students

K-12th, hosted by the Burlington School District, took place Friday and Saturday, May 5 and 6 in Burlington. Professors Soo Joung Kim and Ben White of the Saint Michael's Education Department served on the planning committee and presented. Professor Kim offered a workshop, "Teaching Multilingual Learners in Content Areas: Overview of the SIOP Model." Professor White led a panel discussion, "Building Relationships, Leveraging Resources, Making a Difference: Community-Engaged Learning." The panel included MATESOL graduate students Oumar Djigo (graduate commencement speaker), Andrea Salgado, and Francois Wemniga as well as Abeer Al Zubaidy from the Winooski School District and Nancy Lindberg (MATESOL alumna) from the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. Also, the Education Department hosted a celebration on Wednesday, May 10th in the Farrell Room for graduates of the master's program Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. A mix of program faculty, staff, and students recognized the following graduates: Maris Brayfield-Kittell, Oumar Djigo, Dave MacGowan, Andrea Salgado, and Francois Weminga. Congratulations!

[Check out SMC graduate education programs!](#)

Reunion 2023 is around the corner! Have you registered?

We're less than two weeks out from Reunion 2023! Are you ready? All classes ending in 3s and 8s will be celebrated on campus and around Burlington on the weekend of June 2-4. Meet up with your classmates at your class reception on Friday night and spend the day on campus on Saturday for a day of reconnecting and celebration, especially at the P-Knight Party on the 3's field! There are two Reunion events that require separate registration:



- Friday's [Spirit of Ethan Allen Lunch Cruise](#). Please use promo code: SMC23 for a \$2 off discount.
- Friday's [Purple Knight Golf Classic at Sugarbush](#). All are welcome, even those not celebrating their Reunion year!

Don't forget to honor your time at SMC by giving towards your class gift to ensure that future generations of Purple Knights can experience all the wonderful opportunities that your class had. For more information, including the schedule, the attendee list, registration, and Reunion giving opportunities, head to smcvt.edu/reunion.

[Register for Reunion 2023!](#)

Upcoming Alumni Events

In addition to the events highlighted below, we have plans in the works in Boston, Washington, D.C., Hartford, Burlington, and more! Keep an eye on [our events calendar](#) as details are confirmed. Interested in planning an event in your area? Email events@smcvt.edu.

June 2nd-4th: Reunion 2023 Registration is now open! We can't wait to celebrate the classes ended in 3s and 8s. [Register for Reunion today!](#)

June 14th: Saint Michael's night at the Durham Bulls! North Carolina alumni, join us for a night at the ballpark cheering on the Bulls as they face off against the Charlotte Knights. First pitch is at 6:35pm and a BBQ is included with every ticket. [RSVP today!](#)

June 29th: Saint Michael's night at the Lake Monsters! Save the date, more information to come.

July 15th: Saratoga Purple Knights, let's get ready for the races! Saint Michael's has reserved the Big Red Tent for opening day at the [Saratoga Race Course](#). Hotels in the area are booking up fast-- a room block will be available soon, but book your accommodations today! Save the date, more information to come.



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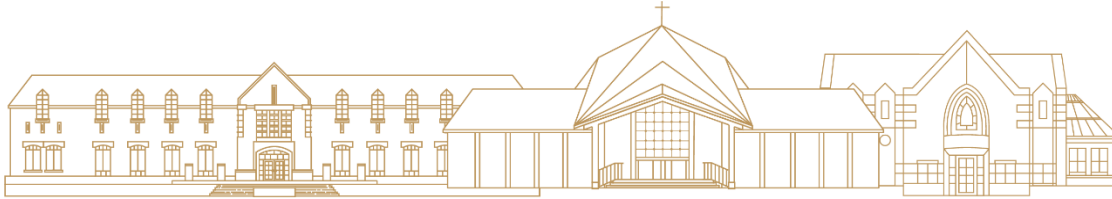


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