



# SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE FOUNDED 1904

OFFICE OF ALUMNI & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

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August 2023 eNews

***The countdown to Move-In Day has begun!***



*This summer, the Media Creation Studio (MCS) had its first film screening and discussion, hosted by Pat Bohan, Director of the MCS, and Alexi Garrett, a faculty member in our History department.*

Dear members of the Saint Michael's alumni community,

I have been overwhelmed by the kindness of the greetings I have received as I navigate my way across campus and into the history, workings, and culture of Saint Michael's. Frankly, many of the colleagues who have offered assistance are proud graduates of Saint Michael's. This alumni presence among our workforce is a basic strength and an endorsement of the College. I have long heard of the

unusually strong affection and dedication held by Purple Knights for their home on the hilltop in Colchester. Now I am seeing it in action.

Our first-year class -- the Class of 2027! -- has 20% more members than the Class of 2026. In June, I visited Saint Anne's Shrine, where a Pre-Orientation Weekend retreat of first year students and upperclass leadership were just wrapping up a three day session. Even then, I could sense the anticipation and eagerness to get started. Now, this week there is a growing presence of current students returning for leadership training and other reasons. Accelerated preparations for the semester continue... we'll be ready.

My role as interim president includes working with the trustees, faculty and staff as we prepare for the arrival of the next president of the College. During this period, the trustees have asked me to focus on our enrollment and advancement efforts, to pay particular attention to the welfare of our students and the finances of the College, and to set further directions for efforts related to the strategic plan, *Forward with Purpose*. I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress during the semester.

I call your attention to [Alumni & Family Weekend](#), September 22-24, when the Alumni Board of Directors will convene and I hope to have an opportunity to greet alumni who return for this great fall celebration. On Saturday of the weekend, we will dedicate the Center for the Environment in honor of Patrick '61 and Marcelle Leahy. I am honored to be able to host the Senator and Mrs. Leahy and our many alumni and distinguished guests for this dedication.

I cannot wait to welcome students back to campus in a matter of days, when enthusiasm, curiosity and joy will abound. I hope to have the opportunity to meet you as I attend events both on campus and off. It is my great pleasure to help grow and strengthen Saint Michael's College during my time here. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

Warmly,

Lewis Thayne  
Interim President, Saint Michael's College



### **Students present summer research findings: overcoming obstacles and celebrating achievements**

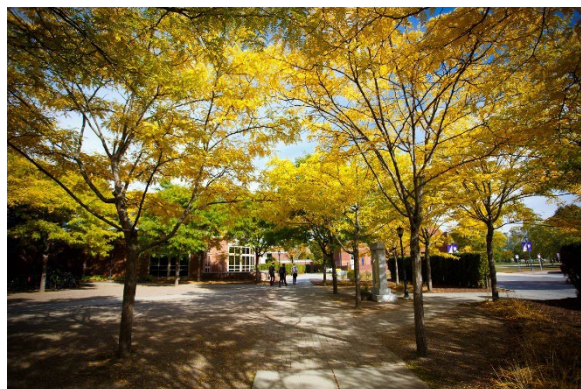
Student summer research wrapped up at the end of July, with student researchers giving their presentations to the campus community on their findings on July 27. On June 7 at the start of their work, students had shared some of

their goals for their research during a campus brunch. Since that time, they have been working with faculty academic mentors thanks to grants through the College's Academic Affairs office, and clearly have had a busy summer. Our students tackled topics including but not limited to: a phenomenology of race, metaphors and visual art on chronic pain blogs, Vermont's support of folks with ASD through the COVID-19 pandemic, ecological health comparisons between old growth stand and natural area, and the integration of EEG biofeedback into virtual reality-delivered meditation. As he does each year during student summer research, Jeff Trumbower, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, stressed how an important and invaluable part of the learning process for researchers and in life is meeting challenges and roadblocks, recalibrating and moving forward productively.

[Read more about this summer's student research findings.](#)

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## **Saint Michael's Alumni & Family Weekend: Join us September 22-24 on campus!**



This year's Alumni & Family Weekend is just around the corner, and we can't wait to welcome all alumni, families, and friends back to campus for a weekend of celebrating! On Friday, 9/22, celebrate this year's inductions into the Athletic Hall of Fame at 6:00pm in the Roy Room of the Dion Family Student Center. There's something for everyone on Saturday, 9/23, from a faculty and staff coffee hour in the morning in Dion to the Welcome Back Bash out on the library lawn that afternoon. On Saturday night, join us for an alumni meet up at Three Needs Taproom and Pizza Cube in downtown Burlington. Capping off the weekend is a complimentary breakfast in the Green Mountain Dining Room in Alliot from 9:00am until regular Sunday Mass in the Chapel at 11:00am. With plenty of athletic events and alumni games throughout the weekend, we hope you share your Purple Knight pride with us!

[See the full schedule \(subject to change\).](#)

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## **Alumni Spotlight: Chuck Tobin '80 to retire from the Saint Michael's Playhouse in October**

After nearly 40 years with the Saint Michael's College Playhouse, Chuck Tobin '80 will be taking his final

bow from the McCarthy mainstage this summer with his retirement at the end of October. Jeff Trumbower, Vice President for Academic Affairs, shared kind words about the remarkable career of Chuck: "Chuck first participated in the summer Playhouse as a college student intern while attending Saint Michael's. He officially joined the Playhouse in 1986 as an actor and associate producer under Donald and Joanne Rathgeb. In the summer of 2004, audiences took in the first shows that Chuck put together as the Playhouse's producing artistic director. Since then, Chuck has put together dozens more shows enjoyed by the community and has created countless opportunities for Saint Michael's students to work with professionals on and off the stage. From annual auditions in New York City among Broadway's top talent to selecting just the right shows each season and seeing each detail through from first to last curtain, Chuck has distinguished himself with the uncompromising professionalism and passion for theater that are his trademarks and legacy, building a following of loyal and enthusiastic patrons." Thank you, Chuck, and congratulations!

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## Alumni student-athletes making headlines with championships, inductions, and awards abound



Purple Knights continue to shine long after their time as student-athletes! For the second time in her two-year professional football career, former two-year Alpine skiing captain [Kara Gailunas '20](#) helped the Boston Renegades win the Women's Football Alliance (WFA) Pro Division national championship, Boston's fifth in succession, live on ESPN2 from the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Two first-year head coaches won state championships this spring, with [Nicky Elderton '15](#) turning the feat on a Vermont baseball diamond and [Katie Daley '20](#) in Rhode Island lacrosse. In his debut season leading a program, Elderton helped Champlain Valley Union High School to a 16-2 record and the 2023 Division I state championship. He still holds Saint Michael's records for career games (145), at bats (504), runs (83) and walks (81) while remaining second in home runs (10) and doubles (31) and third in hits (133). Daley, who appeared in 17 games as a Purple Knight, took the reins of the North Kingstown High School girls' lacrosse program this spring and led the Skippers to the Division II state crown on the strength of a 14-2 record. Second-seeded North Kingstown rolled past No. 1 Burrillville High School, 17-10, in the championship game. [Megan LeCours '19](#) has been named to the EDD Adaptive Sports Board of Directors after working with the organization for nearly a decade. In 44 games as a Saint Michael's women's soccer goalkeeper, LeCours made 40 starts while posting six shutouts with 228 saves, good for sixth in program annals. These are

just a few of our many outstanding athletic program stars-- you can read more on [smcathletics.com](http://smcathletics.com).

[Read more about our alumni student-athletes leading in their communities.](#)

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## The Saint Michael's Ski Center: New life for a historic building

Saint Michael's College is proud to announce plans for a dedicated ski center, designed to meet the unique demands of our Alpine and Nordic ski

teams. With an investment from Saint Michael's and committed support from alumni, parents and the local community, the Ski Center will have a lasting and positive impact on some of Saint Michael's best and most promising athletes, now and far into the future. This is a tremendous undertaking that will have a lasting and positive impact on some of Saint Michael's best and most promising athletes, now and far into the future. Hailing from around the world and across the country, our current roster of skiers made the 2022-23 season one for the record books. This capital initiative is an exciting addition that will propel the world-class Purple Knight Alpine and Nordic ski teams to new heights.

[Learn more and get involved with the Saint Michael's Ski Center.](#)

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## ICYMI: St. Mike's makes *Money* Best Colleges list for 'quality, affordability and student outcomes'

Saint Michael's College has been recognized as one of Money magazine's 2023 Best Colleges. According to publicity from the magazine, Money's latest Best Colleges rating "offers a practical analysis of more than 700 four-year colleges that made the list this year. We start with all of the four-year public and private nonprofit colleges in the country, a group that totals more than 2,400, and score data in three main buckets: quality, affordability and student outcomes."



[Read more about Money 2023 Best Colleges list.](#)

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## Natural Area plays predictable, useful role during epic Vermont flooding

In the Saint Michael's College 365-acre Natural Area, conserved on a flood plain along the Winooski River across Route 15 from main campus, a walking path became a virtual waterway. Yet Declan McCabe, the Natural Area's chief faculty steward, said such predictable and manageable rising water there amid historic and devastating statewide flooding in Vermont testifies to the wisdom of the federal conservation easement for the College that turned former agricultural fields along the river into the now well-used and attended tract for education and recreation. He said a recently constructed outdoor classroom pavilion that is down in the Natural Area remains "high and dry" by deliberate forethought in the permitting and planning for its location. In fact, Katy Farber of the College's graduate education faculty had some of her Master's in Teaching students doing a project with nets and buckets just before the rain, with excellent results. Wondering how to help with cleanup? McCabe says: "Once this emergency passes, I hope folks will consider helping with cleanup. Gloves and trash bags will be left at the trail head – toss branches and natural debris off trail to facilitate mowing. Please bag up buckets, coolers, and flood-borne flotsam and drop at the compost area."

[Read the full article on the flooding in the Natural Area.](#)

[Watch the video of the floodplains in the Natural Area, created by Pat Bohan, Director of the MCS.](#)

*Note: This summer, Vermont has experienced unprecedented levels of flooding, which has impacted communities, families, businesses, and natural areas across the state. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have been affected and in July, [our MOVE office compiled a list of resources and volunteer opportunities](#) to help with relief efforts. One lingering impact is that a large volume of mail at the Montpelier Post Office was destroyed in the flood. Mail delivery has resumed, but the lost mail is gone. If you were expecting something from us that never arrived, or if you sent us something that we never acknowledged or a check that hasn't cleared, please reach out to [alumni@smcvt.edu](mailto:alumni@smcvt.edu).*

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## Upcoming Alumni Events

In addition to the events highlighted below, we have plans in the works in a city near you! Keep an eye on [our events calendar](#) as details are confirmed. Interested in planning an event in your area? Email [events@smcvt.edu](mailto:events@smcvt.edu).

**August 16th:** D.C. folks, this one's for you! Saint Michael's night at the Washington Nationals! First pitch is at 7:05pm. Tickets are \$37/person. [RSVP for the Nationals today!](#)

**August 19th:** Saint Michael's night at Hartford Athletic! CT Purple Knights, join us for a night at the soccer field cheering on the Hartford Athletic! Tickets are \$45/person. This cost includes seating in the Goal Zone, which is an exciting field-level area right on top of the action! Enjoy an all-inclusive pre-game BBQ buffet as part of your ticket purchase. [RSVP for the Athletic today!](#)

**August 28th:** Saint Michael's night at the Phillies! PA folks, cheer on your local MLB team as they take on the LA Angels. First pitch is at 6:40pm. Tickets are \$49/person. [RSVP for the Phillies today!](#)

**September 21st:** Hosted by one of the longest independent Saint Michael's alumni groups, the CT Valley Lunch Bunch is having its 71st annual BBQ at TPC River Highlands Golf Club. The lunch will take place from 12:30 - 4:30 pm and will be attended by special SMC guests including St. Mike's Athletic Director Chris Kenny '86, P'18, Men's and Women's Basketball Coaches, Trustees Patricia Casey and Mark Dalton '73, and Robert Minetti '69. This event is \$55/person, includes BBQ lunch and a cash bar, and is not sponsored by the College. For more information, email Andy McElroy '71 at [andymcelroyjr@gmail.com](mailto:andymcelroyjr@gmail.com) or Kevin Slane '65 at [kjslane@hotmail.com](mailto:kjslane@hotmail.com).

**September 22nd:** The 34th Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony takes place at 6pm on the 3rd floor of the Dion Family Student Center. [RSVP today!](#)

**September 22nd - 24th:** Save the date for Alumni & Family Weekend 2023! Visit [smcvt.edu/fallweekend](http://smcvt.edu/fallweekend) for more the schedule and accommodations.



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