



SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE FOUNDED 1904

OFFICE OF ALUMNI & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

October 2023 eNews

A Month of Homecoming and Celebration



Tour guide Nick Wracker '26, showing prospective students and alumni around campus during Alumni & Family Weekend on Saturday, September 23.

Hello Purple Knight Family,

I'm writing to you fresh from an amazing Welcome Back Bash on a very special Alumni and Family Weekend. It was so wonderful to see so many people enjoying a lively weekend of events both on campus and off. Senator Patrick Leahy '61 and his wife Marcelle stopped by the Club Fair, which was a great surprise. My favorite part as always is to see alumni come home for the weekend and stop by to say hello. Whether you were here for the rugby game, ultimate frisbee match, checking out the Center for the Environment, watching one of the varsity contests, or here to catch up with other alumni later at Three Needs, what a gift it was to catch-up on all that is going on in your lives since Senior Week and Commencement. I miss you all!

Here in the Office of Student Activities, we have lots going on. We are in the final process of hiring a new position: The Assistant Director of Student Activities, Recreation and Fitness. This is a collaboration with the Athletics Department. This person's main responsibility will be to focus on intramurals/recreational events and club sports. We are so excited about the possibilities for all students on campus. We are looking to bring both competitive leagues, fun tournament events, as well as social and just for fun recreational opportunities.

We are also gearing up for Orientation. Yes, that's right, orientation work never ends. It's time to put out applications for our orientation leader board and select coordinators for pre-orientation weekends (POW). POW is a long-standing St. Mike's tradition. We lost three years of POW during COVID and many staff and students have put countless hours of time and energy into bringing it back. We had two POWs this summer at the beautiful Saint Anne's Shrine. Sixty new students and 25 student leaders created amazing and meaningful connections over two weekends in late June. For those of you who went on a POW or were POW leaders, we didn't skip a beat on all the things that make that retreat special. We even had new students who came on POW because one of their parents came on a POW!

We are always busy collaborating with the Student Government Association on many programming efforts. Planning for Friday Knight Dry on Halloween Weekend, Skate Knights at Cairns Arena and Jibfest are all well underway.

Again, it was so great to see so many of you last weekend. Happy Fall to you all! Don't ever hesitate to reach out or stop by when you are on campus. To alumni, the power of the braid from Orientation lives on well past your time here on campus.

All the best you,

Kerri Leach M'04
Director of Student Activities/ Associate Dean of Students





High Achievement at the Academic Convocation

The academic year at Saint Michael's College is officially in full swing following the annual Academic Convocation on Sept. 15 – traditionally, the official commencement of the semester.

The ceremony honors the achievements and milestones faculty members reached as of the start of this year, including those awarded tenure, those who have become full professors, and several major awards based on nominations from across the College. Faculty members also heard from a selected student speaker, the College's President, and one of the faculty award recipients from the previous year.

This year, **Ann Marie Janell '24**, the Vice President of the Student Government Association, shared stories of how faculty members throughout the College had impacted her academic and personal College experience – something she never anticipated as an incoming student. Janell is a Data Science major with Creative Writing and Business Administration minors.

"In my freshman year, I solely wanted to focus on my future career," Janell said. "I was not super interested in a social life or expanding on myself more than required. What I did not know was all that would come my way over the next four years and how I would have no say in this. I attended Saint Michael's for the esteemed academics but found a greater experience."

[Read more about this event and the recipients of these awards.](#)

Kelley Ski Center Breaks Ground

On Saturday, September 23rd the Kelley Ski Center groundbreaking was celebrated by more than 70 community members including trustees, Interim President Lewis Thayne, ski alumni, parents, staff and current student-athletes. Remarks from numerous campus leaders, coaches, team captains and long-time ski program supporter Tom Kelley '69 touched on the history of skiing at Saint Michael's, the excitement this project generated and how the new center will propel the Alpine and Nordic teams to even greater heights.

A cheer erupted when it was announced that the project had met its fundraising goal of \$350,000, ensuring that the renovation of the first floor of Senior Hall races forward. Donations from Ski teams supporters made this milestone event possible. Thank you to all who are investing in the future of Saint Michael's Skiing! We anticipate a grand opening event in Fall 2024 during Alumni and Family Weekend (dates TBD).



[Read more and view photos of the ceremony.](#)



Patrick '61 and Marcelle Leahy Center for the Environment

Saint Michael's College welcomed home 1961 graduate former U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy and his wife Marcelle Leahy on Sept. 23 to honor them for their lifetime of service and generosity to the state of Vermont, to the nation and to the College.

At the center of the events was the newly named **Patrick '61 and Marcelle Leahy Center for the Environment** – a fitting tribute to recognize the Leahys' many contributions to environmental policy and stewardship. One of Senator Leahy's last acts while in the U.S. Senate was to secure a \$6.5 million appropriation for the College's Center for the Environment as part of the 2023 Omnibus Appropriation Bill. This was one of the largest grants in the College's

history, and it will fund the Center's continued development and growth over the next four years.

"I think of the next generation and the generation after that – that's what counts," the former Senator told people who filled the Roy Room in Dion on Saturday during a reception. "If you do it only for this one generation, you've failed, and you're not going to fail. You're doing it for generations to come. And, as long as we can, both Marcelle and I will be there to help."

[Read more about the event and watch the recap video.](#)

A Great Finish for the PK Challenge



Friday, September 29th marked the end of the seventh annual [Purple Knight Challenge](#), a fundraiser aimed at supporting Saint Michael's athletics. Each team worked hard to raise money through a variety of social media posts, word of mouth, emails, and even a two-day phonathon put on by the Men's Lacrosse team. Alumni, friends, families and fans were encouraged to show their support of their favorite St. Mike's team. All in all, there was a total of **1,683 donors** that contributed an incredible **\$246,735**.

Director of Athletics, Chris Kenney '86, M'98, P'18 commented, "these Purple Knights are shining examples of Saint Michael's, proudly representing our College in competition, in the community, and in the classroom – where, for the second straight year and fifth time in our history, we reign as the nation's leader in NCAA Division II Academic Success Rate. As someone who has enjoyed the great privilege of being part of our College's athletics program for many years, I can't think of a better way to honor the legacy of those Purple Knights that came before – and those who will represent Saint Michael's varsity teams long into the future." Thank you for your support!



An Update on the Presidential Search

We are pleased to report that we have experienced a strong response to our Presidential search outreach and recruitment efforts. The search conducted over the course of the summer months resulted in over 90 individuals submitting applications. The applicant pool was composed of very talented individuals with broad and varied backgrounds and experiences. The Presidential

Search Committee has completed multiple rounds of interviews over the past month and has identified three finalists.

The Saint Michael's College community will welcome the three finalists for the presidential search to campus this week. Each of the finalists has deep experience and a vast knowledge of Catholic higher education. They will be interviewed by members of the faculty, staff, students, administrators and trustees in day-long sessions. Saint Michael's alumni will be represented at all but the student discussions. The Board of Trustees plans to name the 18th president later in the Fall.

MOVE Helps One Alum Save a Life Six Years Later

Maggie McKeon '19 said the College's community service organization originally made her want to become a student at Saint Michael's College, so she joined as soon as she could during her first year on campus.

But, McKeon said she could never have predicted the organization MOVE, which stands for Mobilization of Volunteer Efforts, would plant a seed that six years later would help her save a life.



"I knew from the get-go I wanted to be involved," McKeon said.

[Read more about Maggie's story.](#)



St. Mike's Students Show Their Pride at Burlington Pride

Pride Week was packed with vibrant participation from the Saint Michael's College community both on and off campus. College LGBTQIA+ club Common Ground, the Student Disability Advocacy Alliance (SDAA), and the Student-Athlete Advisory

Committee (SAAC) worked together to create an unforgettable week of "Pride For All." There were many of events on campus, starting with the "Pride Walk/Roll." Students holding signs and flags proudly made their way around campus, often being cheered on by bystanders. When they reached the rainbow painted Pride sidewalk near the Bergeron Wellness Center, students lined the path to show their support.

Students also brought their show of Pride off campus to Burlington on Sunday. Saint Michael's College brought out more than 100 people to march as one of the largest groups in the Pride Parade in Burlington. Common Ground led the group, which included the SDAA, SAAC, athletes, faculty, staff, and students.

[More about the St. Mike's pride participation and supporting video.](#)

Remembering Those We Have Lost

Edmundite Campus Ministry held a prayer service in front of Saint Michael the Archangel Chapel on campus Tuesday, September 12th, to bring students, staff and faculty together in remembrance of community members who had passed away and to support those who experienced losses of loved ones over the summer. The service included music, a selection of readings, reflections from Director of Campus Ministry Rev. Brian Cummings S.S.E. '86 and Bergeron Wellness Center Director of Counseling Kathy Butts, prayers, and a candle lighting ritual. Local alumni and friends were also invited and encouraged to attend.



View photos from the event.

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.

October 29th: Come and join St. Mike's alumni at the Washington Capitals game! Tickets are a discounted rate \$82 pp (compliments of SMC) and include exclusive access to the Devils Backbone Lounge. The lounge will open an hour before puck drop and run through the start of the 3rd period in the 400 level lounge area located behind section 429/430. This package includes an entrée with a side from Rocklands BBQ, unlimited beer, wine, soda and water.

October 29th-October 31st: Retreat at Saint Anne's Shrine - "Finding God as a Companion in Navigating Life's Final Journey". Hosted by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington. Registration details and more information found [here](#). If you have any questions reach out to Joe Gallagher: (802) 928-3362

November 10th: Join the Alumni Association's Board of Directors for the 1st of **THREE** networking opportunities this year. Experiencing a career transition? Looking to hire? Need to network among your peers? Want to pay it forward and help a student in their career journey? Let's show the power of the Purple Knight community! On Friday, November 10th we will have an on campus networking event in the Archway Lounge on the 3rd Floor of the Dion Student Center, from **4-6 pm** Refreshments and snacks served. Free to attend. [Register Here](#).

December 19th: Save the date for the St. Mike's night at the Bruins! More info to come.

March 22nd: Join us for our annual Career Symposium! Current Saint Michael's students will be able to attend panel presentations and network with alumni across industries to get a head start on their postgrad career. If you're interested in attending, participating, or being a part of the planning process, please reach out to events@smcvt.edu.

May 31st-June 2nd: Save the date for Reunion 2024! Mark your calendars and start preparing for the big weekend. We are celebrating classes that end in 4s and 9s this time around! More information to come. Want to get involved with your Class Reunion Committee? Email events@smcvt.edu.



[Update Contact Info](#)



[Submit a Class Note](#)



[Make a Gift](#)



[Volunteer](#)

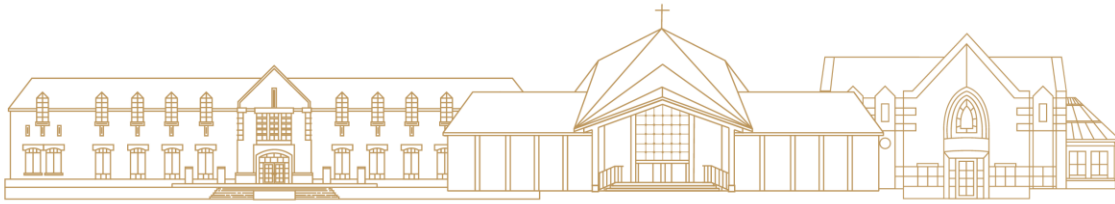


[Read the Magazine](#)



[Subscribe to This Week](#)

Follow Saint Michael's College alumni on social media:



[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

[Saint Michael's College](#)

One Winooski Park Colchester, VT 05439