

REGIS

FOR ALUMNI, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS OF REGIS HIGH SCHOOL | WINTER 2020



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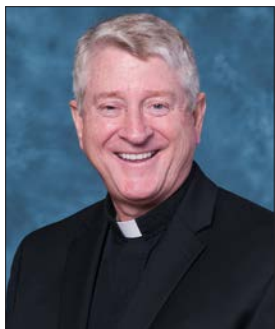


Above With this jumpshot, Joe Manfredi '20 surpassed 1,000 points scored for his career, becoming only the third Regian in recorded history to reach that milestone.

On the Cover REACH students react to the conclusion of a heated battle in their robotics class. Learn more about the REACH Program on p. 10-19.

President's Report

A Unique Undertaking



I have to admit that when I first arrived at Regis, I was a little put off by how “unique” we were. It seemed like we gloried in doing things differently than others. But, as time went on, I realized that it isn't just talk. Regis is truly unique in many, many ways. Of course, there are

lots of commonalities between the Jesuit high school I ran in Houston and Regis. We are governed by the same Jesuit values – AMDG, *Men for Others*, *Magis*, Finding God in All Things, *Cura Personalis*. But there are so many ways that we are indeed unique.

It goes beyond the superficial – our Upper East Side location less than two blocks from the Met and Central Park, doing trimesters rather than quarters and semesters, seniors doing Christian Service on Tuesday mornings and often full-time in the third tri, eschewing AP classes.

Our uniqueness comes from our founding.

The Foundress, Fr. Hearn, and for 105 years our mission has supported *“a tuition-free Jesuit college preparatory education to Roman Catholic young men from the New York metropolitan area who demonstrate superior intellectual and leadership potential. In the admissions process, special consideration is given to those who cannot otherwise afford a Catholic education.”*

This IS unique.

As I meet alumni from various decades, they almost universally tell me, “Regis changed my life.” This assembling of talented young men from across the metropolitan area, regardless of ability to pay, has for generations made this a special place.

Just as Regis has been changing lives since 1914, the REACH Program has been doing the same thing since 2002. As our Strategic Plan states, through REACH Regis can establish “ourselves as the

academic and spiritual gateway for the economically disadvantaged segment of the middle school population in our community.”

The success stories of REACH abound, and just a handful of them can be found in the pages that follow. While many REACH alumni do matriculate at Regis (20 students from REACH have been accepted to Regis each of the last two years), all REACH alumni go on to good high schools and have the foundation necessary to be successful there and beyond.

The Jesuits have long been involved in middle school education and pioneered the Nativity model here in NYC going back to 1971, but the REACH model is different. An intensive enrichment program that provides for students to remain in their own grade schools, the REACH approach was unique to Regis.

But, alas, it no longer is. Yes, other Jesuit high schools have found this model so compelling that they have borrowed and implemented it at their own schools. And we couldn't be happier.

REACH has been an integral part of Regis since 2002, and since its expansion in 2015 it touches even more lives. Its growth has been made possible through the generous support of those within and beyond the Regis family. I hope that the day will come when REACH is fully endowed, but until then, it rightly deserves our support.

As we start this new decade, I thank you for your generous support of Regis High School. Regis is unique, and Regis does change lives. And we can do all this year after year, decade after decade, generation after generation because others share the dream of the Foundress. Thank you.

Be assured of my prayers for you and the entire Regis community.

Daniel K. Lahart, SJ
President

The Office of Development

New Legislation on Charitable Giving: The Impact on Your Taxes

In the last several years, a series of laws enacted by Congress has resulted in several significant changes to the philanthropic landscape, causing charitable-minded donors to re-evaluate the *methods* by which they support their favorite non-profits.

The most recent development comes in the wake of the SECURE (Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement) Act. This major overhaul of the retirement system, which passed with bi-partisan (!) support in December 2019, impacts both charitable gifts and estate plans that involve IRAs.

RMDs and QCDs

The SECURE Act increases the age of Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from 70.5 to 72, allowing those taxpayers who can afford it to delay taking money out of their IRAs. One important piece of good news for charitable giving is that while the minimum age for the RMD has increased to 72, the age at which an individual may make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) will remain at 70.5. This permits taxpayers who fall in that 70.5 to 72 range who are not itemizing deductions to still receive a tax benefit from their charitable gifts.

Since being written into the law permanently at the end of 2015, the IRA Charitable Rollover, as these QCD's are known, has been the tool by which an increasing number of people subject to RMDs donate to their favorite charities without increasing their adjusted gross income. Those QCDs also count toward any RMD owed in the tax year, up to a limit of \$100,000.

In 2019, Regis saw a 20% increase in giving through IRAs vs. prior year for a total of nearly \$800,000.

Those to whom RMDs apply should look for the IRS to publish new proposed life expectancy tables for calculating RMDs in the next year or so. The new tables, replacing those in effect since 2002, will likely result in lower RMDs for most IRA owners and beneficiaries.

The End of the Stretch IRA

Perhaps the single most significant impact of the SECURE Act is the elimination of what is referred to as the Stretch IRA for most (but not all) non-spouse beneficiaries in inherited IRAs and other retirement accounts. **The new law removes the ability of an individual to stretch inherited retirement account distributions over an entire lifetime and now mandates that inherited retirement accounts be emptied by the end of the tenth year following the year of death.**

Estimated to generate \$16 billion to the Treasury over the next ten years, the end of the Stretch IRA will also be a game changer in estate planning as people recognize the tax burden that distributions from inherited accounts (now forced to occur within a limited time frame) may cause the beneficiary. While it has always been more tax efficient within an estate to make charitable bequests from the retirement plan assets and gift to heirs from conventional investments (e.g., stocks, bonds, real estate), the new “drain-in-ten” rule may cause more individuals to consider **naming a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) as a beneficiary of their IRAs or other Qualified Retirement Plans (401k and 403b).** Establishing a CRT, which would provide a steady income stream to the donor's heirs for their lifetime or a set period of years, bypasses the required ten-year payout period and stretches out (but does not avoid) income taxes on IRA assets.

“Bundling” Charitable Giving

Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the standard deduction for 2020 has increased to \$24,800 for married couples and \$12,400 for singles, and to \$27,400 and \$13,700 for couples and singles aged 65 or older.

As a result, **an increasing number of donors have chosen to “bundle” their charitable donations in order to exceed the standard deduction--** either by giving larger gifts in alternating years or by using a **donor-advised fund (DAF)** to condense

Key Takeaways

- You can still make a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA when you turn 70.5 even though the minimum age at which you must begin to take a Required Minimum Distribution is now 72.
- Designating a charity as the beneficiary of an IRA and creating Charitable Remainder Trusts are even more attractive planned giving strategies now that non-spouse inherited IRAs must be liquidated within 10 years of receipt.
- The strategy of “bundling” charitable donations to exceed higher standard deductions continues to fuel rapid growth in donor-advised funds.

several years' worth of giving into one year and gain the maximum tax benefits available while still making annual gifts. The fastest growing giving vehicle in the US, grant-making from DAFs has nearly doubled in the past five years (The 2019 DAF Report). For the second year in a row, the number of DAF accounts grew by more than 50% as DAFs have evolved to offer more flexible structuring, the absence of minimums, and the ability to make smaller grants to charities.

As new laws impacting charitable giving take effect, Regis encourages members of its community to consult with their financial/tax advisors to understand the most efficient ways to meet their philanthropic goals.

To receive a copy of the Regis Planned Giving brochure or speak to someone in the Regis Development Office about the most tax efficient ways to give to the Annual Fund or include Regis in your estate plans, please feel free to contact the Development Office at giving@regis.org or (212) 288-1142.

News & Notes

For expanded coverage of these and other news stories, visit news.regis.org

Friends, Regians, Countrymen!



In December, the Regis Rep's production of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* enjoyed a successful four-night run in the Regis auditorium, including sell-out performances on Friday and Saturday night. The production, which was directed by Mr. David Grunner '05, took a novel approach to the canonical work. Putting to work the skills of costume designer Dr. Allison Tyndall, stage crew moderator Mr. James Langlan, and set designer Ms. Kathleen

Harris P'11'21, the rep brought the play into the 21st century, staging the tragedy as if it occurred in a contemporary boarding school. Additionally, the play was performed "in the round," with audience members on all sides of the performers.

"The play was a huge success," said Regis Rep moderator Ms. Gena Reisig. "We chose Caesar because it's read by every freshman who comes through the school. And it is still fresh and relevant today. The actors did a phenomenal job in bringing this play to life in the 21st century."

Christopher Pocchia '20 delivered a tour de force performance as the titular Caesar, while Obi Nwako '20, Juan Arturo Trillo '21, and Daniel Spiezio '22 deftly navigated the complex emotional currents and political intrigue as Marcus Brutus, Mark Antony, and Caius Cassius, respectively. Other members of the stellar cast included Blake Sheridan '20, Graham Johnson '21, Eric Krieger '21, Eamon McShane '21, Xavier Rousseau '21, Robert Buza '22, Connor Connolly '22, Aidan McMahon '22, Ryan Shanahan '22, Avery Espiritu '23, Charlotte Ainsworth, Molly English, Anaïs Escobar, Arijana Lukosevicius, Grace Marks, and Lauren Mlicko.

Young Alumni Gather for Collegiate Holiday Luncheon



On Monday, January 6, college-aged Regis alumni gathered in the auditorium to catch up with each other and the Regis faculty at the second annual Collegiate Holiday Luncheon. Roughly 100 young alumni returned to East 84th Street, where they enjoyed lunch together and shared news of their time after Regis.

"It was great to have our college-aged alumni back in the building," said Alumni Director Vincent Catapano '96. "It's a pleasure to hear about how they are doing in their college careers and watch them catch up with classmates and former teachers."

Regis Marches for Life

On Friday, January 24, 13 Regians rose early in the morning to travel by bus for the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. Each year, Amate Vitam, Regis's Pro-Life Club, sends a group to join the hundreds of thousands of Americans who collectively bear witness to the right to life.

"Witnessing for the right to life is part of our commitment to doing justice as a Jesuit school," said Mr. David Bonagura '99, Amate Vitam moderator. "Pope Francis has challenged us to reach out to those on the margins, to those whose voices go unheard by our society. Certainly, the unborn, the most vulnerable of all, need our voices to speak for them, so they may have life and fulfill the vocation God created for them at the moment of their conceptions."

This year marked the 47th annual March for Life with Americans from across the country and of every ethnic and religious

background cheering and praying that every life may be valued and protected. The marchers were blessed with a sunny and moderate day for their walk along Constitution Avenue, which began at the Washington Monument and concluded at the Supreme Court Building. Along the route the Regians spotted dozens of fellow high school students, including a large group from Tampa Jesuit that had made the long trip from Florida.

The event made an impression on first time marcher Ned Kerwin '23. "It was amazing to see so many people united for a single cause," he said. "Going to the March also helped me understand how necessary prayer is to saving lives."

Gabriel Alexander '21, who participated for the second time, understands the



importance of the March. "The March for Life," he said, "not only serves as a recognition of America's enormous pro-life population, but also as a show of solidarity with the voiceless unborn. As Catholics, we are called to uphold the dignity of all God's creation, and as Americans, we have a duty to safeguard the right to life."

Regis Rises to the Challenge

In a show of generosity and commitment to community, seven East Coast Jesuit high schools participated in a friendly but spirited holiday food drive competition. In all, the students of these schools collected 137,632 pounds of food to provide local food banks and pantries with much-needed provisions during the critical Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

Launched in early November, the competition, called the Great Ignatian Challenge, included Fairfield Prep (Fairfield, CT), Fordham Preparatory School (The Bronx), Loyola School

(Manhattan), Regis, Saint Joseph's Preparatory School (Philadelphia, PA), Saint Peter's Prep (Jersey City, NJ), and Xavier High School (Manhattan).

The challenge was created by Jim Rowen P'12 in 2016 to put a spotlight on hunger in our communities. "St. Ignatius taught us that love speaks louder in deeds more than words," he said. "The students at these seven Jesuit schools embody Ignatian principles and beliefs. I am inspired by their commitment to be *Men for Others*."

This year, Regis students collected 15,352 pounds of food (29.02 pounds



per student), which was donated to New York Common Pantry, landing the school in third place among the seven competing schools. Loyola (68.67 pounds per student) and Fordham Prep (36.59 lbs. per student) led the way.

Since the Challenge began in 2016, the participating schools have collectively amassed 218 tons of food.

Regians Shave Their Heads to Fight Childhood Cancer



On Friday, January 31, nine Regians shaved their heads to raise money and awareness for the fight against childhood cancers. Maciej Adamczyk '21, Ryan Birney '20, TJ Jarney '23, Seth Kampta '21, Piotr Kozlowski '21, Anthony LaBarbara '21, Justin Luckner '20, Liam McClain '20, and Erik Roll '20 each took to the barber's chair to fulfill a promise they made in order to raise funds for the St. Baldrick's Foundation, which advocates for childhood cancer patients and helps fund cancer research.

The shaves ditched their hair in solidarity for all those affected by childhood cancer. This event, which has been held in the Regis auditorium for the past seven years, attracted a large, supportive crowd and roused the Regis community to answer the call to become *Men for Others*.

"I strongly believe that this helps foster an environment conducive to Christian Service and generosity," said Justin Luckner '20, who organized the event and has personally raised \$21,062 since he started participating in 2014. "And I think it helps strengthen the bond among Regians, whether it's the compliments that the shaves receive from their peers, or the bond among the community of shaves themselves."

In total, the Regis community raised more than \$6,500 (the goal set out by the nine young men), including donations as well as money raised by a special grub day to mark the occasion. The Regis coalition joins with a national effort that annually raises upwards of \$30 million in support of childhood cancer.

Prayer Service Honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



On Thursday, January 16, Regis students and faculty gathered in the auditorium to reflect on the life, legacy, and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Students had the opportunity to pray and listen to classmates' reflections on interpersonal relationships.

The prayer service coincided with the end of "No Name-Calling Week" — a school-wide effort to rethink the ways in which we engage with those around us to continue to live as *Men for Others*.

"Martin Luther King's message of radical inclusion and solidarity offers us a clarion call to build up our community and foster a culture of inclusive brotherhood here at Regis," said Fr. A.J. Rizzo, S.J., Director of Mission and Identity. "We gather each year to pray for the strength, courage, and resilience necessary to make Rev. King's dream a reality. Taking his message to heart means intentionally living out the Gospel values at the heart of Jesuit Education."

Obi Nwako '20, who spoke at the event, concluded his talk by advocating for a greater focus on brotherhood in the Regis community. "I urge you to remember what Dr. King said: 'We may have all come on different ships but we're in the same boat now.'"



Joe Manfredi '20 Surpasses 1,000 Career Points

Two defenders hounded Joe Manfredi '20. With just under two minutes to play and a four-point lead to protect, Salesian seemed intent on preventing any late game heroics from the Regis star, who already had poured in 27 points.

Manfredi spotted an open teammate, Joseph Zuccarello '21, and passed out of the double team. As he released the ball, he immediately cut toward the basket, leaving the two Salesian players behind him. Zuccarello passed the ball right back, and Manfredi rose up and hit a contested jumper from just beyond the foul line, cutting the Salesian lead in half — and cementing his place in Regis basketball history.

That shot, taken in the final minutes of the game on Friday, January 10, put the Regis senior over 1,000 points scored in varsity competition for his career. Manfredi joins former greats Brian Foley '98 and Marty Mannion '77 as the only Regians in recorded history to reach that mark.

“It’s an honor,” Manfredi said. “It means a lot.”

The milestone also carries special significance for Manfredi because of another former high school basketball star who is a member of New York City’s 1,000-point club. Linda Manfredi, his mother, surpassed 1,000 points in her career at Moore Catholic High School

on Staten Island, and she accomplished the feat without the benefit of the three-point line. “She doesn’t let me forget that,” Manfredi jokes.

The younger Manfredi’s march to 1,000 started two seasons ago when Mr. Kevin Cullen, the longtime Regis coach, invited the talented player to join the varsity team as a sophomore. Cullen didn’t promise playing time, but Manfredi quickly established himself in preseason scrimmages as one of the team’s top performers. He started throughout the season and helped lead the Regis squad to a city championship and a state title. In the thrilling state championship game, the young Manfredi led all scorers with 23 points. He followed up his standout sophomore season with an excellent junior campaign, again helping guide the Raiders to a city crown.

When Manfredi hit the shot that put him over 1,000, the tight game against Salesian was paused, and the senior was presented with the game ball as classmates and family members roared with approval. The following Tuesday, during halftime of a game against Sacred Heart, the Staten Island native was honored again and presented with a banner commemorating his 1,000 points.

“He deserves it,” said Cullen, who is in his 19th season at the helm of the varsity program. “He works harder at his craft

than anybody I’ve ever coached, and I’ve coached some great players over the years.”

Manfredi’s tenacity and excellence on the court also extends to the classroom, where he has thrived at Regis. Rev. Arthur Bender, S.J., '67, who has taught Manfredi in each of the senior’s four years at the school, remembers being immediately impressed with his inquisitiveness and fearlessness.

“My first encounter with Joe occurred when I took over his freshman history class for a couple of months when his regular teacher was on maternity leave,” Fr. Bender said. “Joe stood out immediately from his peers because he was constantly asking questions. He really did want to understand completely the material we were covering, and he did not mind showing his ignorance by asking questions.

“I found this especially remarkable for a freshman at Regis since students here were all at the top of their class in grammar school and the last thing many of them want to do is admit that they do not know something. Joe had no such hesitation. He did not care what others thought; he only cared about mastering the material.”

Manfredi will carry these attributes with him to college next year, where he plans to continue playing basketball. The University of Chicago, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a number of other Division III programs are recruiting him.



Ignatian Spirituality

The Fourth Day

Who was the real John Francis Regis?

Was it the man who was committed to the poor, the sick, and the powerless?

Or was it the Jesuit who gave his life to win souls to Christ?

*By Fr. Anthony D. Andreassi, C.O.
Principal*

One would be hard pressed to find someone who graduated from a Jesuit school in the United States in the last four decades who is not familiar with the term “men and women for others.” This familiar motto underscores a key objective of a Jesuit education: to prepare its students to be firmly if not passionately committed to promote the cause of justice, particularly in their chosen professions. However, I would wager that few of these same alumni/ae know the origin of the phrase or the full context of how it was first articulated, and this is not because its origin goes back far in time. In fact, its history dates back less than 50 years. It was on July 31, 1973 that Father Pedro Arrupe, S.J., the 28th superior general of the Society of Jesus, spoke at a gathering in Valencia, Spain of Jesuit alumni (at this time almost if not all of whom would have been men) from the Society’s schools around Europe. Because of the “new awareness in the Church,” which largely came as a result of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), Arrupe admitted that the education most of these men

had received before the Council had not given due emphasis to the “promotion of justice and the liberation of the oppressed” required of all Christians, especially in the daily work of their jobs. Nevertheless, Arrupe had a firm hope that a more modern and responsive Jesuit education could now form “men-for-others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ — for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for men is a farce.”

It is most important to not lose the strong connection Arrupe makes between the commitment to service and justice and the individual’s relationship with Christ as a member of the Church, even though the rest of Arrupe’s words from 1973 do not lend themselves as easily to the formation of a slogan as “men (and women) for others” does. Because of pressures and challenges coming from both inside and outside the Church, now more than ever is it our task as Ignatian educators to

help our students see the intrinsic connection between faith in Christ and service of those in need. While we try to do this both inside and outside the classroom, for the last few years we have done this in a most intentional way around the birthdate (January 31) of St. John Francis Regis. In coming together to celebrate Mass in honor of our school’s patron, we are able to bring to our collective attention the details of Regis’ life which so powerfully brought together in one human person that strong commitment to selfless service and a deep and transformative relationship with Christ.

Much of what is remembered today about Regis is his deep commitment to those on the margins of southeastern France where he ministered as a Jesuit in the first decades of the 17th century. He is especially remembered for the care and attention he showed to those in jail, bringing them both food and medicine; his work with vulnerable women, who because of abuse and poverty, were forced into prostitution; and his organizational efforts to provide basic medical care to the sick in rural areas. Because of all of this, we might call him a social justice pioneer for both his direct ministry to those in need as well as his attempts to address the structures which led to this suffering and injustice. And so many people today — Catholics and non-Catholics, believers and non-believers — can find much to celebrate and emulate in this aspect of his life. But this was only half of who John Francis Regis was; this was only half of his life and legacy.

After attending a Jesuit secondary school in Beziers, at the age of 18 he entered the Society of Jesus. Thanks to the strong spiritual formation he received while training to become a Jesuit priest,

2019 ANNUAL REPORT CORRECTIONS

The 2019 Annual Report contained some errors and omissions which are noted here. We apologize for these and any other errors. Regis could not exist without your generosity, and we extend to you our sincerest gratitude.

For a digital copy of all revised 2019 Annual Report lists, visit regis.org/annualreport.

President's Circle

- Mr. Christopher R. Fadden '69

Stephen Duffy, SJ Circle

- Mr. C. Travers Garvin '93



by the time he was an adult Regis had developed a mature and transformative relationship with Christ that had shaped who he was how he saw the world. This led him to want to share with others how a relationship with Christ as a committed and practicing member of the Church might transform their lives too. This missionary zeal led him to do all



sorts of things in similar ways to how he ministered to the bodily needs of those who were suffering. To reach people's hearts, Regis spent countless hours teaching the Catholic faith to children, celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, and anointing the sick. Many of the people of the region of France where he worked had become Calvinist during the Protestant Reformation, but by his day, most had little or no real faith whether as a Catholic or Protestant. Thus they

were ripe for a representative of the Church, a priest, whose exemplary life might convince them to once again consider Christ and give their lives over to Him. Father Regis did this reaching out to these people's souls while also tending to the needs of their bodies and hearts too. One line from an early account of his life says it best: "Regis' mornings were spent in the confessional, at the altar and in the pulpit, and his afternoons he devoted himself to prisons and hospitals."

So who was the real John Francis Regis? Was it the man who was committed to the poor, the sick, and the powerless while also working to address the injustices that led to their suffering? Or was it the Jesuit priest who poured out his life in preaching and sacramental ministry? The answer, of course, is that it was both. This was the two halves of the one man with each part forming and fostering the other. If these two halves had been separated, then neither would have had the same strength or efficacy on its own.

This truth should stand as a model for us at Regis High School as we strive to help our students connect these two halves of their education and formation: their relationship with Christ as active members in the Church and their commitment to justice and to accompany those who suffer. So often in our daily prayers at school we offer them through for the intercession of St. John Francis Regis. As we do this, both educators and students, we would be well served to remember the legacy of St. John Francis Regis, a man whose life so powerfully brought together both a deep faith in Christ and a powerful commitment to service and the promotion of justice: two equal halves forming the whole life of this Jesuit saint and our school's patron.

THE REACH DIFFERENCE

For 18 years and counting, the growing REACH Program has opened doors and changed trajectories for Catholic boys from New York families with financial need.

“What do you hope to get out of this program?”

Pedro Polanco '13 searched for an answer. Days earlier, he had boarded a bus filled with unfamiliar faces and traveled from Manhattan to the University of Scranton, where he would be spending the next three weeks as a new student in the REACH Program. Now, away from his family for the first extended period of his life, the 11-year-old Bronx native had to articulate why, exactly, he had come to this faraway place.

Polanco finally settled on his response. His goal for the REACH Program, he decided, was to learn to write with his left hand.

“Clearly I didn't even fully understand what the program was about or what it really could give me,” he says.

Looking back 14 years later, Polanco says that REACH gave him quite a lot. After three summers in Scranton and at Regis High School coupled with dozens of Saturdays taking classes while many children his age played sports or watched television, Polanco was admitted to Regis, where he thrived academically. He went on to study Mechanical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and he now works as a senior strategy consultant at Accenture in Chicago.

Polanco's journey is inspiring but not uncommon. Since its founding in 2002, REACH (Recruiting Excellence in Academics for Catholic High Schools)

has welcomed hundreds of middle school-aged Catholic boys from low-income backgrounds and helped prepare them to earn scholarships to New York City's Jesuit high schools (Regis, Cristo Rey New York High School, Fordham Preparatory School, Loyola School, and Xavier High School) and other top high schools. Roughly 75 percent of REACH students today come from families who earn less than \$60,000 per year, and roughly 80 percent of students have at least one parent who was born outside of the United States. REACH alumni, from those currently in college to members of the original class, speak glowingly of the program's impact on them.

“The REACH Program doesn't just prepare its students to earn high school scholarships. It changes their lives in profound ways,” Regis President Fr. Daniel K. Lahart, SJ, says. “REACH pursues the same noble goal the Foundress had for Regis more than 100 years ago: to provide an excellent Jesuit education to Catholic young men who otherwise could not afford it.”

REACH's success is inarguable yet remarkable. As concrete solutions to educational inequity continue to prove difficult to identify, the REACH model works — as demonstrated both by the impressive improvements in REACH student's standardized test scores and the many amazing success stories of REACH alumni. The program's effectiveness comes from a special combination of academic rigor, leadership development, and spiritual



formation along with a basic structure that has stood the test of time. And with a newly expanded enrollment and a growing team of dedicated administrators, REACH's impact should only increase in the years ahead.

That first bus ride that Polanco took to Scranton is a moment that comes up repeatedly when alumni reminisce about their time in REACH. Having just completed 5th grade, new REACH students are not eased into the program; their first experience with REACH involves leaving their family, often for the first time, to spend three weeks on a college campus. (Starting in 2017, when the program began its recent expansion, REACH students now spend their first summer at Fordham University and Fordham Prep, while second- and third-year students are in Scranton.) Fr. Christopher Devron, S.J., REACH's founding director, intentionally designed the program to begin with an all-encompassing, residential experience.

"I believed that if we took students out of their environment and created our own environment that would simulate what it's like to be at Regis or one of our other Jesuit high schools, then we could begin to help students develop the habits needed in order to succeed academically and socially and even spiritually," he said.

Fr. Devron, who has served as the President of Fordham Prep since 2013, arrived at Regis in 2001 with instructions to launch the program that would become REACH. Over the previous several decades, the socioeconomic status of much of the Catholic population in New York had gradually improved, and Regis administrators wanted to ensure that the school lived up to its founding mission and continued to attract and serve talented students from low-income Catholic families.

The basic structure that Fr. Devron and his colleagues implemented has largely remained in place. REACH students, who are chosen through a rigorous admissions process modeled on Regis' own, spend three weeks each summer at Scranton or Fordham and then three weeks commuting to Regis each weekday. During the school year, these

students, who are in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, attend classes most Saturdays at Regis.

The REACH curriculum focuses heavily on Mathematics and English Language Arts, the two subjects most critical for preparing students to gain admittance to and succeed at top high schools. Throughout the summer sessions and during the school year, all REACH students take classes in these subjects, and the REACH staff includes a full-time academic dean for both Mathematics and English Language Arts. The goal in both subjects is to both reinforce critical skills and lessons the students learn in their grammar schools and introduce new concepts that will be critical to their success moving forward. Students also take classes in Robotics, Coding, and Public Speaking on Saturdays during the school year, and Latin and Civics courses are added in the summer.

"We are explicitly not trying to cover everything that is in the New York State curriculum for grades 6, 7, and 8," says Doug Eickman '05, who became the Director of the REACH Program in 2019 after spending the previous nine years as its Dean for Mathematics. "We are focusing on what we think are the core skills that will be essential on the high school level."

In addition to the excellent faculty, the high caliber of the students in the

program promotes learning and hard work, according to several REACH alumni. Being in an environment filled with fellow students who are self-motivated and care about their grades isn't always the norm at their schools.

Serge Efaq, who graduated with REACH's second class in 2006 and went on to Xavier High School, Syracuse University, and a career as an entrepreneur, says that at REACH for the first time he didn't always get excellent grades and he was "surrounded by people who were much smarter than me on an academic level. It's humbling for one, but then two, it just showed you the level of competition here. So it also validated that I had to step it up."

The hard work that REACH students put into their demanding classes on top of their regular school work has paid dividends. Each year, REACH administers a national standardized test that is similar to the exams its students will take to gain admittance to Catholic high schools. The progress has been remarkable. For the past seven REACH graduating classes, the average gain in percentile points (which measure where a student ranks compared to national norms) from 6th grade to 8th grade is 9.2, which is a dramatic, eye-catching figure for those in the education field.





These academic gains are exemplary, but they are only part of what makes REACH special. While sharpening its students' minds and academic skills, the program also molds these young men into exemplary leaders and, in the Jesuit tradition, *Men for Others*. REACH has five core principles that are integrated into every aspect of the program: Open to Growth, Intellectually Skillful, More Faithful, More Loving, and Servant to the Community.

"They preach about their five principles all the time," says Carlos Ventura '16, who graduated from REACH in 2012 and is now a senior at Cornell University. As a REACH student, Ventura didn't give much thought to how these principles were influencing him outside the program. Years later, though, he says he has a deep appreciation for how REACH changed his personality — transforming a shy, quiet student into one who is comfortable asking a lot of questions, for example — and how he continues to apply these principles to his daily life. "When you look back on it, you realize that actually it worked."

The Arrupe Project, a service initiative undertaken by all REACH 8th graders, is one component of the program that

many REACH alumni point to as having had a particular impact on them. Named for Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, the longtime Superior General of the Society of Jesus who passed away in 1991, the project calls on REACH students to identify a problem or challenge in their local communities and implement a program to help address it.

Polanco still draws inspiration from one of his classmates' Arrupe project. The student had organized an initiative in which he got elderly people in his neighborhood together on a regular basis to play checkers and chess. It wasn't a grand, groundbreaking undertaking. But what Polanco admired was how such a simple but meaningful act could tangibly impact others — in this case, elderly residents who often lacked other opportunities to socialize.

"He was a middle school kid. He was super young," Polanco remarks. "And it just felt really empowering to feel that, even though I was a child, I could do something really good."

Like many REACH alumni, Polanco says that the Arrupe Project and his broader REACH experience instilled in him an enduring drive to seek out opportunities to help those in need. In 2019, he led a service project focused

on nutrition and public health through the Obama Foundation's Community Leadership Corps. Polanco offered free cooking classes to Chicago residents who live in food deserts, sharing recommendations on how to make balanced, nutritious meals with ingredients that are readily available in their communities.

The Arrupe project is one of many examples of how Jesuit tradition and spirituality inform and animate the REACH Program. Advisement groups are named after saints (like St. Francis Xavier, SJ, and St. Peter Faber, SJ) and other prominent Jesuits (like Fr. Mateo Ricci, SJ, and Fr. Rutilio Grande, SJ). Each REACH class day at Regis begins with Chapel, where REACH students pray together, sing hymns, and listen to reflections. When the students live in dorms at Fordham and Scranton during the summer, each day ends with a nighttime reflection, a modified version of the Examen that teaches the boys a deeper, more introspective form of prayer.

"For me, it gets to the core of what the program was attempting to do, and that's self-reflection," Fr. Mario Powell, SJ, who served as Director of REACH from 2015 through 2019 before becoming President of Brooklyn Jesuit Prep. "God already knows who you are and God will continue to add to that information, but what God really needs from you is for you as an individual to know who you are as well."

When asked about their most meaningful memories of REACH, many alumni point to the nighttime reflections. "I didn't realize at the time how profound of an impact it was," says Ruben Martinez '09, who was a member of the inaugural REACH class that graduated in 2005. Martinez, who now works at Facebook in Austin, Texas, says that he still tries to take time at night to look back on the day and think about what he did well and what he could have done differently.

Nighttime reflections also are a key ingredient in the deep, enduring bond that develops between REACH students. Most students enter the program not knowing any of their classmates, who

come from different neighborhoods, schools, and backgrounds. But by the time they graduate, thanks to the three years they shared and especially the three weeks each summer living in community together, they have formed friendships that will last well beyond REACH.

Enrique Abreu-Ramos '19, who is a member of the prestigious Posse Scholars program at Vanderbilt University, says that he stays in close contact with his REACH friends during the school year and makes plans to get together with them when they return to New York for breaks from college.

"It's an interesting fraternity that they become a part of at the age of 10," says Russell Quiñones '09, who joined the administrative staff in 2018 in the new role of REACH Program Director of Graduate Support. "They have this connection across the city to all five boroughs, and it happens organically."

The connection extends beyond individual class years. REACH alumni, nearly all of whom graduate with great affection and gratitude for the program, are motivated to support and connect with the REACH students who have come after them.

"I know that going through the REACH Program is what led me here, and I just want to make sure that they understand how much I respect and appreciate the program," Ventura says. "I hope that the new students get the same experience that I got, that it's as transformative as I felt it was, and hopefully they can follow a similar path."

This desire to serve the program and its next generation has motivated many alumni to return to REACH during the summers as counselors during their high school years and collegians during college. Past and present REACH administrators agree that these two positions — which are now mostly filled by REACH alumni — have been instrumental to the program's success.

"They work 18-hour days, and they do it with a smile and are excited to be with the kids," Eickman says. "I think they model the perseverance that it takes to be successful in our institutions.

They share stories of their time in the REACH Program and, if they didn't go to REACH, their stories of their time at Regis or Xavier or Fordham Prep."

REACH students often connect with and look up to the counselors and collegians — who are closer to them in age and usually come from similar backgrounds — in a different way than they do with REACH teachers and administrators. "I've had so many people to look up to in the REACH program," Abreu-Ramos says. "I think that might be the thing that I'm most grateful for."

As a college student, Abreu-Ramos still hears from REACH. In his new role, Quiñones offers support and guidance to REACH graduates during the high school and college years, focusing especially on the transition years — freshman year of high school and college. He also works closely with REACH's alumni board and plans to increase opportunities for REACH graduates to support current students and younger alumni.

A sharper focus on alumni support is one of a number of recently completed, ongoing, or planned enhancements to the program, many of which were identified as priorities during Regis' strategic planning process. This summer, REACH completed a four-year gradual expansion that grew the total enrollment from 100 to 150 boys. Clyde Cole '87, an educational consultant who was REACH's original Assistant Director and helped Fr. Devron get the program off the ground, returned to teach a class at Regis in the summer of 2018 and was around the program full-time for the first time in years. "It feels very much like a school," says Cole, who noticed more "hustle and bustle" than he remembered. "It's a lot bigger than a lot of Nativity schools."

Eickman and his team also continue to look at how they can strengthen their curriculum, and they would like to add a fourth residential summer. (Currently, REACH students who have just finished 8th grade attend the three-week summer session at Regis, but they don't travel to Scranton.) REACH hopes to hire an additional admissions officer to work

alongside Assistant Director and Dean of Student Recruitment Alan Garcia '08.

There is no shortage of interest in REACH. In early January, Garcia stood up in front of a standing-room-only Regis auditorium and spoke to a crowd of more than 400 potential students and family members and, in English and Spanish, shared the details of a program with life-altering potential. He was followed on stage by a panel of REACH students and their parents, all of whom raved about the changes they observed in their sons. A few nights later, another 250 people attended a second open house. More than 400 students have been nominated for REACH this year. From this group, 75 boys will be chosen as semifinalists and brought in with their families for interviews. In the end, 54 full scholarships to the program will be awarded.

Those 54 will then find themselves in the same position as Pedro Polanco once did — away from home, living on a college campus with a group of strangers, and wondering what this program might bring. And while Polanco still can't write with his left hand, he can offer a resounding endorsement to any REACH newcomers.

"I don't know how you could ever say enough about REACH, to be honest," he says. "I wouldn't be anywhere where I am today without that program."

Thank You

Like Regis, the REACH Program is tuition-free and funded by the generosity of its supporters. For a full list of individuals and foundations who make REACH a reality, please visit regis.org/annualreport.

If you'd like to make a gift in support of REACH, please visit regis.org/givetoREACH or contact the Development Office at giving@regis.org or 212-288-1142.

CHARTING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

More than 400 Catholic middle schoolers have graduated from the REACH Program since its founding. These young men collectively have earned more than \$25 million in scholarships to Catholic high schools, and they've gone on to attend elite colleges, from Georgetown and Cornell to M.I.T. and Fordham.

Their stories, five of which are shared below, are the story of the REACH Program.

RUBEN MARTINEZ



*REACH Program, Class of 2005
Regis High School, Class of 2009
The State University of New York at
Binghamton, Class of 2013
Program Manager, Facebook*

When Fr. Chris Devron, S.J., visited St. Nicholas of Tolentine School in the Bronx to encourage students to apply for a spot in the inaugural class of the REACH Program, one fifth grader hung on every word.

"I had always been kind of ashamed of the fact that I was the smart kid or the nerd or pretty gentle and got good grades...while everyone around me was focused on basketball and the neighborhood and being cool," Ruben Martinez remembers. "It was the first day, honestly, I feel like in my school career up until that point that I actually felt like — wow, here's an opportunity to have somewhere where I could belong or something for kids like me."

When Martinez got home, he gave the brochures Fr. Devron had distributed to his mother, telling her that he wanted to attend Regis, a high school he hadn't heard of prior to that day, and that this new program could help get him there.

Asked where this internal drive came from at such a young age, Martinez points directly to his mother, who came to New York from the

Dominican Republic at 19. A single mother who didn't speak English and struggled to make ends meet, she stressed to her two sons that their difficult circumstances didn't have to be permanent.

"From as long as I can remember, she always said education was our one opportunity to change all this," Martinez says.

He took his mother's words to heart, throwing himself into REACH, where he immediately felt at home, and ultimately graduating from Regis and SUNY Binghamton.

Martinez, who now manages a team at Facebook in the tech giant's office in Austin and recently purchased a home there with his wife, has come a long way from that classroom at St. Nicholas of Tolentine. But he says he frequently reflects on the journey that began with a visit from Fr. Devron.

"It has been a step change in terms of my trajectory, and I would not at all be where I am today without that."

KEITH MESIDOR



*REACH Program, Class of 2007
Xavier High School, Class of 2011
Notre Dame, Class of 2015
Dentist, Washington D.C.
VA Medical Center*

Keith Mesidor wanted nothing to do with the REACH Program.

"Imagine you're 10, and they're like, 'Oh you have to go to summer school, but it's not because you did bad in one of your classes. It's just summer school,'" Mesidor says. "I'm pretty sure I cried."

Mesidor's parents felt differently. After moving from Haiti to Brooklyn when Mesidor was five, his mother and father sought out any opportunity to enhance their son's education.

While it still took time for Mesidor to come around to the idea of taking classes during the summer — or on Saturdays throughout the school year, for that matter — he liked his REACH classmates immediately. In fact, Mesidor says his best friend is Chris Chavez (see p. 19), whom he met on his first day in the program.

Mesidor's appreciation for REACH deepened, though, when he enrolled at Xavier High School along with several of his classmates from REACH. It didn't take long for Mesidor to realize how much learning algebra and doing advanced reading in REACH had set him up for success. "The transition both socially and intellectually was smooth," he says.

Mesidor went on to Notre Dame, where he earned a degree in Science Preprofessional Studies and was a long jumper on the track team. He became a dentist, and is now completing his residency at a VA hospital in Washington, D.C.

Looking back, Mesidor credits the REACH Program for instilling in him the discipline required to thrive academically and professionally.

ADRIAN ALONZO



REACH, Class of 2010
Fordham Preparatory, Class of 2014
Holy Cross, Class of 2018
Engineer, Turner Construction

Some days, Adrian Alonzo, who graduated from college less than two years ago, finds himself overseeing a dozen subcontractors as their teams execute construction projects at major commercial properties in New York City. And sometimes that means admitting what he doesn't know.

"I was taught to always ask questions," Alonzo says. "Be open to different opportunities and possibilities."

Alonzo was taught these skills, he says, in the REACH Program. They're hardwired into him now, allowing him to confidently ask men and women with decades of experience the right questions at the right time and in the right manner.

It's not the first time Alonzo has noticed the work he put into REACH paying dividends. In his first English class at Fordham Prep, he clearly saw REACH's impact. Alonzo, whose parents

are from Ecuador, grew up speaking Spanish, so English class always had been challenging for him. But now, as a freshman in high school, he felt comfortable.

"I didn't feel behind the other students," Alonzo says. "I felt like I was right on pace. And I definitely had the REACH Program to thank for that."

After excelling at Fordham Prep, Alonzo attended Holy Cross, where he majored in Economics and Physics and, for two years, roomed with one of his classmates from REACH.

Alonzo eventually plans to attend graduate school. He knows that, as he continues through life, the values and skills he picked up at REACH will continue to guide him.

CHRIS CAMPBELL



REACH, Class of 2012
Loyola School, Class of 2016
Senior, Tufts University

Chris Campbell loved his Math classes at REACH, but not necessarily for the reasons students typically enjoy a class. He always excelled in math at St. Ann School in the Bronx, but REACH was different.

"It was great because I didn't get everything right, and it took me a lot more time," Campbell says. "I was never just sitting there, and there was always room for improvement."

Similarly, in his English Language Arts classes at REACH, Campbell felt the conversations analyzing the books the students read were at a deeper level of sophistication than he was accustomed to. He relished learning alongside students who, like him, strived to succeed in school and genuinely enjoyed learning.

As much as Campbell improved as a student thanks to REACH — he earned a scholarship to

Loyola and will graduate from Tufts this spring with a degree in Biology and Biotech Engineering — he says the personal and spiritual formation side of the program may have been even more significant.

"I feel like I literally got my personality or learned what my personality is from REACH," Campbell says. He entered the program as a quiet, shy young man. By his second summer in Scranton, though, Campbell says the REACH principles had altered the way he carried himself and the manner in which he interacted with others. He learned how to lead inside and outside the classroom, and he was more open to new experiences.

As he looks forward to his college graduation this spring, Campbell, who is planning to find a job in Biotechnology in New York, is confident that these traits will help aid him in the professional world as well.

AIRAM CRUZ



REACH, Class of 2014
Regis High School, Class of 2018
Sophomore, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Airam Cruz can tell you exactly where his interest in Aerospace Engineering, his major at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, originated. During his first summer in Scranton, Cruz and his REACH classmates went on a field trip to a nearby observatory.

"It was the first time I saw with my own eyes the different planets and stars through a telescope," Cruz remembers. "And it blew my mind."

Cruz hadn't even started sixth grade yet, but he was instantly hooked on astronomy. He began teaching himself as much as he could about the subject in his spare time through documentaries, YouTube videos, and books. This passion continued throughout his high school years at

Regis, and Cruz has now immersed himself in the subject at one of the top-ranked engineering schools in the country.

A native of the Hamilton Heights section of Harlem, Cruz almost didn't even apply to REACH. He was hesitant to give up his summers and so many Saturdays during the school year, but his mother pushed him to pursue the opportunity.

Cruz now views REACH as the critical turning point in his life, and he is grateful for his mother's foresight.

"Honestly, it was the best decision I've ever made in my life."



A Conversation with Doug Eickman '05

Doug Eickman '05 became the Director of the REACH Program in 2019 after spending the previous nine years as REACH Dean of Mathematics and a teacher in Regis' Math Department. In January, Vice President for Development James Kennedy '02, who served as REACH Dean of English Language Arts from 2015 to 2017, sat down with Eickman for a wide-ranging discussion of the program.

A condensed transcript of their conversation is published below. To watch a video of the entire discussion, visit regis.org/news or Regis High School's channel on YouTube.

I know you've been with REACH since 2010. I'd love to know more about how you got involved with the program and what inspired you to work with REACH.

On some level, I think I've always known I wanted to do work with something like the REACH Program. My path to being an educator started in high school and college — loving the classes I was in, thinking about educational access and my own personal story. My family was very much a working-class Brooklyn family. My mother was a nurse. My father had a bunch of jobs. He ended up working for the MTA. Neither of them had the traditional four-year college experience. I knew I wanted to do something that involved working with what we call an underserved population.

I fully intended to be a public school educator, actually. My arriving in Jesuit

education was a complete accident. I was in grad school around the time of the New York City teacher hiring freeze, and my grandmother found an ad in the *New York Times* for a teaching position at Regis, and it mentioned something about the REACH Program. I was only dimly aware of what it was. I was a young kid coming out of college and grad school and found out about the REACH Program by accident, and I'm really grateful that I did.

So you've been the Director of REACH for less than a year now, and you've remarked to me before that leaving the classroom and entering a leadership role is a big move. What has that been like?

I definitely miss the classroom. When I went into education, it was definitely to be a classroom teacher and interact with the kids. But one thing that's nice about

the REACH Director job is that I still have a lot of on-the-ground interaction with kids. I lead our chapel services on Saturday mornings and during the summer. This past summer I had a chance to be a classroom teacher. I don't think that will be the case going forward, but there are so many times where I still get to be on the front lines because we're still a pretty small program in the grand scheme of things.

I think that, as an institution, we're lucky to have you in the role since you've had a long history with the program. You have a teaching background and an administrative background to bring to the work that you do now. So, on chapel, I know the singing...

You're not going to get me to sing on camera.

I wasn't going to ask! But you do lead the kids in song?

I do. I actually love singing with the kids. I'm not a musician by any stretch of the imagination, but it's fun. We talk about being open to growth, and I think the best way I can do that is by being this big, goofy guy who is not afraid to get up in front of 100 middle schoolers at 9:00 on a Saturday morning and sing a Gospel song.

Thinking about the REACH summer, those six weeks — three of them residential, three back at Regis — what do you think has made those summers really impactful and really effective? And as you think about the future of the program, what are some of the ways you and your team are considering evolving the program?

When you think about it, we're taking 150 middle schoolers — we're taking 100 of them to Pennsylvania, and 50 to Fordham. They're staying with us 24 hours, so we're basically mom, dad, teacher, caregiver in all senses of that word for those three weeks. I think the magic of the summer happens because of how intense that experience is. I don't know if REACH would be anywhere near as successful as we are if we did not take the kids with us. That residential experience is key because it requires a high level of buy-in from the families and it offers us an opportunity to work with the kids in a really holistic way. We get to work with the kid from the moment he gets up to the moment he goes to bed and instill in him what it means to live your life according to these principles that we've established. It's that retreat aspect to it, where you go away into the wilderness of Scranton, Pennsylvania — not to offend the fine denizens of Scranton, Pennsylvania — and then you come back to your normal environment. Now you're ready to take what you've learned and take what you've experienced and bring it into your day-to-day life, and that's plugging into a tradition that we've used in Jesuit education for a really long time.

When I think about where we need to go, specifically vis-à-vis the summer experience, I have a lot of thoughts. I've often wondered what we could accomplish with a fourth summer right before high school. That's a big question for us.

One of the things that always sticks with me is how critical the other adults on campus are — not only the teachers that you hire, but also the collegians, who are really with their groups 24/7, living in the dorms with them. The counselors that support the teachers. And many of those counselors and collegians are REACH alumni. Some of them are Regis alumni.

One thing that I often say to staff is that the further I get in age from a REACH student, the less power I have

“That residential experience is key because it requires a high level of buy-in from the families and it offers us an opportunity to work with the kids in a really holistic way. We get to work with the kid from the moment he gets up to the moment he goes to bed and instill in him what it means to live your life according to these principles that we've established.”

in influencing them. I don't think that's always true but in some sense it can be. I have a Master's in math and I have all this experience, but it's actually that 20-year-old, who knows where they're from, who looks like them, who speaks in that same manner, that they're comfortable with. That [collegian] has an unbelievable ability — maybe even just in a manner that's as

simple as being the way that he is — to inspire that growth that we're looking to see. I often describe the collegian position as being a single father of 12. That's very much what it is for three weeks. And they are the backbone of our program along with our counselors and, during the year, our mentors. I think that's really where the most growth happens on the part of REACH students — not just as students but as people.

You make a great point about REACH alumni being able to talk to, kind of, their younger brothers, figuratively speaking. I think that's extremely powerful. And I know you guys did, earlier this month, an event with REACH alumni. Can you say a little bit more about that community of guys that are now out of college that came through REACH — what their connection to one another and the program is like?

It's pretty cool to be able to see this cohort of young men, who are really not much younger than I am, who are out in the world doing exciting things. We've got people in law school. We've got people becoming doctors. We've got people in successful business. That they went through this experience 12, 13, 14 years ago, they are bonded because of that. I think a lot of people have that experience in their high school and their college. But to say you had that experience in your middle school summer program? That's pretty remarkable. I don't think there are a lot of people who are eagerly changing their plans on a Friday night to get together with their summer camp buddies from seventh grade. So you see the kind of brotherhood that exists, and the one thing that I've been struck by when talking to REACH alumni is the hunger that exists in this population to mentor and to serve as guides, as you said, for the younger brothers — the ones that follow in their path. There's a real hunger in the community to support, in whatever way they can, future REACH students and ensure that they're successful.

One thing that I think is really special about REACH is how closely you and your team work not just with students but with their families.

Yeah, there's a lot of work that goes on with the families. When I started, I was very

much a teacher and curriculum designer, but over time as I got a little older—I was 21 when I started—I got a chance to have more individual conversations. You're calling the family in, and it's not because they're in trouble. You're trying to share feedback with them in a really productive way. And it's more than a traditional parent-teacher conference. We're going over test scores. We're going over these detailed narrative evaluations. We're trying to paint the family a holistic picture of who their child is as a student and as a leader, and understanding that leader in the context of the five pillars of Jesuit education. We're trying to work with the families and learn information from them about how we as a team can get this kid to where he needs to get over the next two years. And to make the gains that we make, that's the kind of work we need to do.

And these conversations can be kind of tricky because these young men have been successful wherever they are — that's why they're in the REACH Program. But you're trying to say: Actually, there's another world up there. There are these amazing schools, and we think you have the capability of being up there. And you're on track, but it's going to be a long road.

And we know that you're going to need to grow as a reader. You're going to need to take that 10 minutes every night and make it 30. And you're going to have to take that 95 that you have, and we're going to make it a 99. And the way we're going to do that is, we're going to use your planner and we're going to organize some separate homework time every day.

It's really about knowing the family and meeting each case where they are. I think there's this myth that families from underserved backgrounds don't care about education or value education. I've never experienced that in the work that I do. But I do meet families that aren't equipped, maybe it's because they don't speak English very well, or because the system they know is in another hemisphere. And so we're really trying to equip these families with the tools that they will need to navigate this complex system. The American educational system — for better or for worse — is incredibly complicated in New York. And it's really about giving them the tools that they will need, while assuring them that you will be alongside them the whole way, to navigate that landscape.

It really is inspiring work that you do with families. And I think you've even gone to

learn Spanish on your own, right? To be able to better communicate with those families?

I'm not fluent. My wife and I went to Costa Rica for a couple of weeks to do some immersion, and I audited a few classes here at Regis. And the families appreciate it. Sometimes I run into an accent that I struggle with, or sometimes I can't express an idea. But they appreciate the effort. We have two other staff members who are fluent in Spanish, and so they can do the lifting that I can't do, which is really good.

This has been great, and there's so much more we could talk about. One last thing I want to ask you is: What's your favorite REACH story?

I think I have to cheat and name two categories of stories. We're in high school admissions season right now so I have admissions on my mind. We just had a family — the kid just got accepted to Regis — and they did a video of their acceptance to Regis like it was a college signing day. And it was just incredibly sweet to see the kid and the family just going nuts and celebrating.

The other thing that just jumped out to me was broken bones, which is a weird thing to say is one of my favorites. But, weirdly, the moments where I've been most proud of the program and most impressed by the level of commitment that our families show is when kids are injured or hurt. I've never had a situation when a kid got injured and the family said, "Ok, well he's going to have to withdraw from the program." I don't want to make it seem like kids were breaking bones left and right at the REACH Program. It does happen. I'm remembering a particular instance where a kid broke his arm. We actually spent a whole night with him at the hospital. We called up the family and told them if he wants to spend a couple days at home, that would be understandable, and they said, "No. He broke his left hand. He's a righty. He's here to do a job. There's no reason he can't do it." It's a pleasure working 18 hours for a family like that. I think I've had that happen three or four times. Different digits and different bones, but I find it just incredibly inspirational.



Doug Eickman chats with REACH students at the beginning of a REACH Saturday in December.



FROM REACH TO **Sports Illustrated**

Sportswriter and podcast host Chris Chavez, REACH Class of 2007, reflects on the ways in which the REACH Program shaped his life.

I often think about how different my life would be without the REACH Program. It's a strange mental exercise that sometimes happens when I pass the 86th Street subway station or when I'll watch an episode of "The Office" and a Scranton reference is made to somewhere I visited as a seventh-grader for a summer weekend field trip. I truly believe that the REACH Program set the foundation down for me to build a successful future.

If it wasn't for the REACH Program, there's a high likelihood that I would have been a follower as a student. I possibly would have attended a high school just because my friends were going there or because it was closer to my home in Queens. There's a good chance that I would not have been introduced to the Jesuits and their tradition in education. Who knows what career profession I would've gone into?

Instead, I went through the rigorous application process and found myself in a class of about 30 rising sixth-graders headed to Scranton and away from our families for the first time. That's where we did more than just advance our skillset in language arts and math. We also learned valuable life skills and fostered friendships – some of which I still have to this very day.

The sacrifice of six summer weeks led me to become a leader in the classroom when I got back to school in the fall. Many of my former REACH classmates can recount a similar experience. Those weeks and Saturdays

throughout the school year were challenging but ultimately paid off when we all went off to high schools of prestige in the city. Many of us also earned scholarships to assist our families. REACH's namesake and mission of recruiting excellence in academics for Catholic high schools was accomplished but just one step forward.

I went on to attend Xavier High School, where I experienced some of the best four years of my life as I continued growing in my education and faith with many of the REACH principles still applied to my daily life. A funny story of how I went on to find a foothold in journalism at Xavier also comes as a result of REACH.

Many of the original collegians, Regians, and teachers from the early REACH years probably recall how much of a Yankees fan I am. REACH kickball and whiffle ball games were treated like the World Series because I didn't play organized baseball until 8th grade due to the conflict that a Little League schedule would have with REACH. It was a setback in my athletic development, and when I was cut during freshman year baseball tryouts, my dreams of playing for the Yankees were dashed. It was time to pivot to the next-closest way of staying involved in sports, and I figured reporting on it was the best option.

I wasn't the strongest writer in my REACH classes, but I grew to love storytelling in high school and stuck with it through college and post-collegiately. I chose to attend Marquette

University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin because while I was in a similar position coming out of middle school, I balanced scholarship offers with the sense of community. Marquette being a Jesuit school with a good journalism program made it the right decision.

I've covered countless college basketball games, Major League Baseball games, and eventually accomplished a dream of covering the Olympics in 2016. Whether it's through articles, videos, or podcasts, I harken back to the fact that REACH helped give me the tools that I've put into practice at *Sports Illustrated*.

Before fully immersing myself in newsrooms and internships, I spent three summers as a counselor and collegian trying to highlight that for the next generation of REACH students. When I'd see their work ethic in and out of the classroom, it took me back to the summers of 2004, 2005, and 2006, and I saw myself and my classmates in them. Many of the kids I worked with have gone on to great high schools – and since I'm getting older, some are already in college. I'm thrilled to see that the lineage of success stories continues to this very day and can't wait to see what comes next.

Chris Chavez graduated from the REACH Program in 2007, Xavier High School in 2011, and Marquette University in 2015. Chavez has worked as a writer for Sports Illustrated since 2015, and he hosts the Runners of New York City podcast.



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REGIS

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Fore! The Regis Golf and Tennis Outing returns to Pelham Country Club on June 15, 2020.

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Events Calendar

For more information on upcoming events, visit regis.org/events

MARCH

- 10 Sophomore/Junior Parents Reception**
Cocktail reception with Fr. Lahart
- 23 Denver Regional Reunion**
Humboldt Farm Fish Wine
- 28 Parents' Club Auction**
6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- 31 Boston Regional Reunion**
The UMass Club

APRIL

- 4 35th, 40th, and 45th Alumni Reunions**
Classes of 1975, 1980, and 1985
- 25 15th, 20th, and 30th Alumni Reunions**
Classes of 1990, 2000, and 2005
- 29 Washington, D.C. Regional Reunion**
The Dubliner

MAY

- 4 Philadelphia Regional Reunion**
Union League Club
- 9 5th and 10th Alumni Reunions**
Classes of 2010 and 2015
- 14 President's Dinner**
Recognizing supporters of Regis at the President's Circle Level
- 30 25th Reunion**
Class of 1995

JUNE

- 3 Baccalaureate Mass**
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola
- 6 Graduation**
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola (ticketed event)
- 13 50th Reunion**
Class of 1970
- 15 Golf and Tennis Outing**
Pelham Country Club

2020 REUNIONS!

- April 4** 1975, 1980, 1985
April 25 1990, 2000, 2005
May 9 2010, 2015
May 30 1995
June 13 1970

Email events@regis.org
for more information



REGIS ON THE ROAD

While many Regis alumni are based in the tri-state area, Regians can be found across the country. Each year, Fr. Daniel K. Lahart, SJ, makes an effort to visit alumni and friends of the school where they live and host regional reunions in select cities. This winter, he traveled to Florida and California with Vice President for Development James Kennedy '02.

In January, the visit to the Sunshine State started in West Palm Beach, where a Regis group gathered for a luncheon at Brio Tuscan Grille. A day later, another group event was held at the Capital Grille in Miami. Alumni were present from classes ranging from 1953 to 2011, including a particularly large group from the Class of 1978. From there, Fr. Lahart and Kennedy traveled across "alligator alley" to Naples for a group dinner at Coopers Hawk Winery. There is a significant contingent of the Class of 1962 in Naples — a trend begun



by the late, great Ron Ferreri '62, former Vice President for Advancement — and a lovely evening was had by all. The trip concluded in Tampa, with an event at Tampa Jesuit High School, where alumni peppered Fr. Lahart with questions about the strategic plan and asked about where the Regis baseball team would do its spring training.

The following month, Fr. Lahart and Kennedy packed their bags for a trip to the west coast that began in the Bay Area and concluded in Los Angeles. (A trip to San Diego is being planned for later in the year.) The Regis administrators spent one day on the peninsula, visiting alumni and friends in San Mateo and on Stanford's campus. The following day, they stayed in San Francisco, meeting an alumnus at Google and then hosting an event at the Olympic Club.

During their visit to the Los Angeles area, Fr. Lahart and Kennedy drove from Manhattan Beach to San Fernando and from Westwood to Santa Monica for a number of individual meetings before a group event that evening. Having hosted an event last year at the Jonathan Club's downtown location, this year they accommodated the "west siders" and gathered at the Jonathan Club's beach location in Santa Monica. The group enjoyed drinks near a fire pit and heat lamps as Fr. Lahart gave an update on all the news from 84th St.

In all, Fr. Lahart and Kennedy met with more than 70 members of the Regis family during these two trips. Please check the events calendar above for upcoming regional reunions and visit regis.org/events for additional trips that will be scheduled in the coming months.



REGIS HIGH SCHOOL

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REACH students enjoying class on one of the many Saturdays they spend at Regis.