

# REGIS

FOR ALUMNI, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS OF REGIS HIGH SCHOOL | SPRING 2021



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## REGIS

Christian Talbot '93  
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Director of Major Gifts & Planned Giving

Catherine McCordick P'17'19  
Director of Foundations and Major Gifts Officer

Jerry Russo '95  
Director of Alumni Relations

Kiera Bader  
Development Coordinator

Jennifer Reeder  
Database Manager

Magda Correa  
Executive Assistant

John Morin '16  
Communications Associate

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**Above:** Seniors participate in Contemporary Social and Political Issues, an elective taught by Director of Admissions Eric DiMichele.

**On the Cover:** Regis students listen intently during a hybrid Chemistry class in the renovated Lecture Hall.

## President's Report

# The Room Where it Happened



It happened in Room 408. I can still picture Mr. Sabatelli pacing about while we sophomores discussed Richard Hofstadter's *American Political Tradition*. I can still picture how the desks were arranged. I can still picture my spot in that circle of chairs.

At that desk and in that classroom, I realized how I needed to spend my adult life: I needed to become an educator.

It's one of those moments whose details you can remember decades later. But why did my future become so clear at that precise time? Mr. Sabatelli, a Regis legend who shaped so many of us, certainly played an important role. My classmates, with their passions and brilliance, inspired me then as they do now. And the excitement for learning ignited by Regis must have factored in, too.

Whatever the precise alchemy, from that point forward the only profession I pursued — vocation, in fact — was that of a Catholic educator. For most of my career, that path has led me back to Regis.

Outside of my parents, Regis has formed me more than any other force in my life. Throughout my four years as a student and my 14 years as a faculty member and administrator, Regis students, teachers, and staff have made me the Ignatian educator I am today. When I left Regis in 2012 to serve as Head of School at Malvern Prep, an independent Catholic school outside of Philadelphia, I found myself regularly thinking of my colleagues, friends, and mentors at Regis, summoning their wisdom (or calling them!) when faced with a difficult decision. More recently, during my six years as a trustee, my admiration deepened for the people who make this life-changing institution a reality.

So the answer was obvious when the Board of Trustees asked me to return to 84th Street to serve as Interim President. I am humbled and honored to help lead this school.

Now, as one of the most unusual school years in Regis history concludes and we look ahead to the next one, we have much to do. We are determined to ensure that the next academic year restores the power of the Regis experience for our students, some of whom have not truly experienced Regis because of the limitations imposed by COVID-19. In addition, the morale of our resilient faculty and staff, who kept the school running for 15 months during a pandemic and unexpected leadership change, is critically important to me. We are also halfway through Regis' first Strategic Plan, which I had the honor of helping to craft as a trustee. Finally, my colleagues and I are committed to welcoming and caring for each student, regardless of his race or background. (I invite you to read my May 5 letter to the Regis community, available at [news.regis.org](https://news.regis.org), about the reason why our Jesuit identity and mission demand that we oppose racism.)

We could not do this important work without the profound generosity of the Regis community. Your gifts help Regis to change lives, which is how we change our world. We can't always identify the precise moments, but we know that on a daily basis — in Room 408 and throughout this building — Catholic young men are being transformed thanks to your commitment to our mission. As our public health situation improves, I look forward to introducing (or re-introducing) myself and thanking you in person over the coming months.

Sincerely,

Christian Talbot '93  
Interim President

# The Office of Development

## A Remarkable Gift

A Regis scholarship is a remarkable gift. As the Class of 2021 finishes their remarkable four years on 84th Street, many of our seniors reflect on the day they opened the letter from Regis, offering them admission and a full scholarship to the top-ranked Catholic school in the country. This opportunity is a gift to those young men, and Regians grow in their awareness and gratitude as their time as students — and alumni — continues.

The Foundress and her family began this mission, one which is now sustained by thousands of supporters year in and year out. With a real cost today of \$25,000 per student, a Regis education cannot be reduced to a dollar amount, given the impact it makes on the lives of our young men and the impact they go on to make on the world as *Men for Others*.

The Annual Fund continues to be the most important source of support to sustain this tradition and mission of all-scholarship education. This year's effort, *For the Greater Glory*, calls us to support students who will be guided by the Jesuit motto: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*. Our students are gifted young men, committed to excellence, leadership, and service, and they give us hope for the future.

Despite the challenges of the past year, the 2021 Annual Fund has seen strong performance through the first three quarters. With the end of the fiscal year on June 30th around the corner, we are deeply grateful for the many gifts that make the gift of a Regis education possible.

## Reuniting Virtually

As the pandemic began last spring, the reunions for classes ending '0 and '5 were postponed. At the time, we naively believed that they might be pushed back a few weeks or a few months. Little did we know that COVID-19 would continue to wreak havoc well into 2021. Thus, the next cycle of reunions, for classes ending in '1 and '6 also needed to be reimagined.

On Saturday, April 24th, the Office of Development hosted a virtual reunion for a stunning 24 reunion classes. Early in the day, panel discussions took place via Zoom, with accomplished alumni, as well as faculty, staff, and current students participating. One alumni panel discussed the impact of COVID-19 on public health and the medical community. Another focused on the wide world of sports and how it has adapted to the many challenges posed by the virus.

There were also panels about Regis today, with one focusing on the high school broadly and another sharing an update on the REACH

Program. All panels were well-attended and, we hope, provided interesting information and an opportunity to connect.

The speaker events of the day culminated with an interview with NBC White House Correspondent Mike Memoli '00. Regis' Director of Communications, Kevin Brennan '03, a former DC reporter himself, interviewed Memoli in an engaging and interesting conversation that ranged from Regis to following Joe Biden on the campaign trail and beyond.

In the evening, alumni gathered for a virtual Mass, and then heard comments from Board of Trustees Chair Anthony DiNovi '80, Interim President Christian Talbot '93, Vice President for Development James Kennedy '02, and Director of Alumni Relations Jerry Russo '95. After these remarks, the most important aspect of the event took place: classmates gathered in Zoom rooms to reminisce, reconnect, and celebrate the milestone of an anniversary of graduating from Regis, whether 5 years ago or 65.

## A Tax-Smart Giving Opportunity

With the return of the required minimum distribution (RMD) in 2021, a tax-smart way to support the school is through the IRA Charitable Rollover provision, which permits individuals over 70.5 years of age to distribute up to \$100,000 from their IRA to charity, free from federal income tax. Since the gift does not count as income, it may also help you avoid higher taxes on Social Security benefits, higher Medicare premiums, and higher tax brackets.

Please consider making a gift from your IRA by June 30 to help Regis meet its goal for the 2021 Annual Fund. For assistance in making a gift from your IRA, call 212-288-1142 or email Megwin Hoopes at [mhoopes@regis.org](mailto:mhoopes@regis.org). Please be sure to consult with your tax advisor before taking any action.

Many other virtual events have allowed the Regis community to stay connected despite the circumstances. The President's Dinner, typically hosted at the St. Regis Hotel, again took place on Zoom. We also used Zoom to hold our first edition of a program for members of the St. John Francis Regis Society, which recognized those who have made a planned gift to Regis.

Happily, small in-person events are beginning to return to Regis. We are grateful to the many members of our community who joined for a virtual event over the past 15 months, and we eagerly look forward to hosting you in person when it is safe and possible to do so.



For over  
one  
hundred  
years,

Regis High School has sent forth *Men for Others* – deserving young men, formed in the Jesuit tradition, who go on to transform the world around them for the greater glory of God (*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* – AMDG). During these uncertain times, the exceptional value and impact of a Regis education is as important as ever.

Please consider making a gift to Regis by June 30, the end of the annual fund year. Visit [regis.org/give](http://regis.org/give) to make a gift today. If you need help planning your gift, visit [regis.org/waystogive](http://regis.org/waystogive) or contact the Office of Development at 212-288-1142 or [giving@regis.org](mailto:giving@regis.org).

Your gift to Regis makes possible the formation of each of our *Men for Others*. Thank you so much for your generosity!

# News & Notes

FOR EXPANDED COVERAGE OF THESE AND OTHER NEWS STORIES, VISIT [NEWS.REGIS.ORG](https://news.regis.org)

## Christian Talbot '93 Named Interim President

On April 11, the Board of Trustees named Christian Talbot '93 Regis High School's Interim President. For Talbot, the former Head of School of Malvern Preparatory School in Pennsylvania, the appointment marks a homecoming to his alma mater, which he previously served with distinction for 14 years as a faculty member.

"I am humbled by this opportunity to return to Regis, an institution that profoundly shaped me academically, spiritually, and professionally," Talbot said. "It is an honor to serve once again alongside our talented faculty and staff. They do life-changing work in educating and forming our exceptional students in the Ignatian tradition."

A 1993 Regis graduate, Talbot has vast knowledge of and a deep passion for the school. In 1994 and 1995, he founded the Regis-Gonzaga Summer Program, which was an early prototype for the REACH Program. He worked at Regis from 1998 through 2012 as an English teacher, Chair of the English Department, head of the Faculty Council, and a founding faculty member and the first Dean of English for the REACH Program. Since 2017, he has served on the Board of Trustees, where he has been a member of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Education and Mission Committee.

From 2012 through 2017, Talbot served as the Head of School (i.e., President) at Malvern Prep, an independent Catholic middle school and college preparatory high school in Malvern, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia. After Malvern Prep, he founded Basecamp Consulting, through which he has worked with high schools around the country on governance and strategy issues. Talbot also has taught a course entitled "Major Gift Fundraising: Strategy in Practice" as a Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania since 2019.

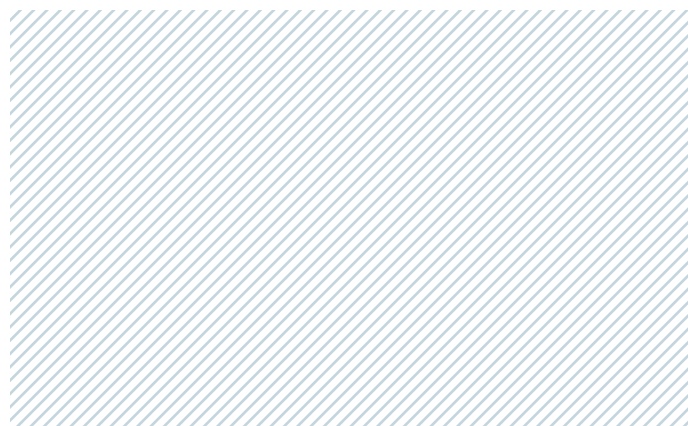
A 1997 graduate of Georgetown University who holds a Master's Degree from the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, Talbot serves on the Fordham Preparatory School Board of Trustees, where

he has been a member of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Mission Effectiveness Committee. He also has completed the "Seminars in Ignatian Leadership" offered by the Jesuit Secondary Education Association (now known as the Jesuit Schools Network).

"The Board is thrilled to have found a candidate with the experience required to run an institution like Regis who also knows the Regis community and has participated in its operations at every level," Board of Trustees Chair Anthony DiNovi '80 wrote in a letter to the Regis community. "We know he will steer the school through the remainder of the school year with skill and integrity. I know Christian well, and I could not be more excited by this choice. I hope you will all join me in congratulating and welcoming Christian in his role. Christian will certainly be among the candidates considered as the Board continues its work toward identifying and naming a full-time President."

Talbot replaced Fr. Daniel K. Lahart, SJ, who was determined by a third-party investigation to have engaged in inappropriate and unwelcome conduct with adult members of the Regis community. For more information, please read DiNovi's April 11 letter to the Regis community, which is available in full at [news.regis.org](https://news.regis.org).

"Regis will emerge from this experience even stronger," DiNovi wrote. "After the last six weeks, I am convinced that we as a community have learned from this experience and will be better equipped than ever to fulfill our mission of transforming lives and forming *Men for Others*."



## Regis Hosts 2021 JFR Day



On Thursday, May 13, the Regis community gathered to participate in the annual St. John Francis Regis (JFR) Day. Formerly a single day for examining a social justice topic, JFR Day has developed into a more holistic program, calling for students, faculty, and staff to study and discuss a single issue of moral significance throughout the academic year and consider the roles they play in creating a more just world through conversation, reflection, and prayer.

The theme of this year's JFR Day was "Race: School, Country, Church." Throughout the year, the Regis community has engaged in a critical examination of the moral and social issue of racism in our world, which has helped to shape the school's broader Race at Regis initiative to cultivate an environment of compassion and understanding for people of all backgrounds at Regis and beyond. (For more information on Race at Regis, please read the May 5 letter to the Regis community from Interim President Christian Talbot '93 that is available on [regis.org](http://regis.org).)

The day's events began with a keynote address from Hari Kondabolu, a stand-up comedian and former immigrant rights organizer who uses humor as a vehicle to provide social commentary on issues of race in America. After Kondabolu spoke and answered questions posed by Regians, students were invited to convene with their advisement groups to debrief the morning's discussion and begin a dialogue on broader topics of race at Regis and beyond. Additional presentations followed over the course of the day, including an update on Race at Regis from Interim President Christian Talbot '93, Assistant Principal for Student Life Christian Mariano '99, and REACH Director of Recruiting and Admissions Alan Garcia '08.

"We're at the beginning of this conversation. This is not the end. I know JFR Day is an appropriate culmination to a year long conversation, but that conversation is really just starting," Talbot told the student body. "As a Jesuit school and as a Catholic school, we will continue to explore this question of Race at Regis both intellectually and spiritually."

Following the update, Garcia hosted a panel on the importance of acting as an ally with REACH Dean of English Language Arts and Regis English teacher Shannon Dey, REACH Program co-founder Clyde Cole '87, REACH teacher Dave Robles, and REACH and Regis graduate Brian Reyes '17. The day concluded with a school-wide Mass live-streamed from the Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola, where freshmen and juniors celebrated in-person at a safe distance. Regis Principal Fr. Anthony D. Andreassi, CO, served as the primary celebrant and was joined on the altar by Fr. Arthur C. Bender, SJ, '67.

"This call to spread the kingdom calls us not only to act rightly and justly in how you and I live our lives every day, but it also calls us, just as importantly, to work to end systems that have historically marginalized other people," Fr. Andreassi said during his homily. "Let me be very clear. We must do this work not because of our adherence to an outside ideology or belief system. No, we must do this work because of our baptism, because of our identity as Christians and as members of a school rooted in the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the mission and the history of the Society of Jesus."

## Regis Golfer Commits to the University of Pennsylvania

In December, in a momentous step for the recently revived Regis Golf program, George Roessler '21 signed a letter of intent to play Division I golf at the University of Pennsylvania. In a small, socially-distant signing day ceremony, family, friends, and coaches gathered in the Regis gymnasium to witness Roessler officially commit to continue his education and his golf career at the Ivy League school.

"We are living through an incredibly difficult time in the world right now," Roessler said, "and to enjoy the opportunity of a formal signing day where I was able to have my family and friends support me as I took the next step toward college was more than I could have ever imagined possible. I am very grateful for all the teachers, administrators, coaches, and friends who have supported me throughout my Regis career. I would not be in the position I am without them."

Roessler has played a key role in the revitalization of the Regis Golf program, which returned to competition in 2019 after a long hiatus. Only a sophomore that year, Roessler finished fourth in the state championship tournament. His junior season was upended by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Golf has been a part of my life since my first memory, and playing college golf has been a dream of mine since I was a little kid," Roessler said. "Regis has further provided me the opportunity to develop my academics, and I intend to represent our unique high school as best as I can at University."



## Regis Classmates Earn 2021 Goldwater Scholarships For Physics Studies

In March, Regis classmates Alex Manduca '18 and Andrew Sullivan '18 were awarded the 2021 Goldwater Scholarship, the preeminent scholarship in mathematics, science, and engineering in the United States. Recognized from a pool of roughly 5,000 college sophomores and juniors, the college students were commended for their educational pursuits in the field of Physics and their intentions to pursue careers and research in STEM after college.

Established in 1986 in honor of the late Sen. Barry Goldwater, The Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation has committed itself to providing deserving students a pathway to become STEM professionals and better serve the country in these areas. Out of this year's applicant pool, 1256 students studying the natural sciences, engineering, and mathematics were nominated by 438 academic institutions in the United States, and after final deliberation, 409 students were ultimately chosen to receive the prestigious award.

Sullivan, a Physics major at Columbia University, is grateful to receive this honor, and attributes his success to his teachers at Regis who cultivated in him a passion for science. "I developed a love for Physics in my junior year at Regis while in Dr. Matone's Physics class," said Sullivan, who also was an active member of Regis' Astronomy Club. "The course was my first introduction to Physics, so it was only then that I realized how interesting the subject could be. Dr. Matone was an excellent teacher and mentor, always willing to answer my questions both about class material and about Physics in general. It was incredibly motivating to have Dr. Matone, a physicist who contributed to LIGO, one of the most groundbreaking Physics experiments of all time, as my first Physics teacher."

Manduca, a Physics major at St. Joseph's University, expressed similar thanks to the educators who have shaped his interest in Physics. "At this Jesuit institution, I've had the good fortune of being mentored by extraordinary professors, like Dr. Paul Angiollilo, that encouraged me to reach out beyond the limits of our campus," said Manduca, who also studied Physics under Dr. Matone while at Regis. "This led me to Dr. Mark Devlin's lab at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Devlin gave me an opportunity to become a part of his laboratory and contribute to his research. These individuals, from Dr. Matone to Dr. Angiollilo to Dr. Devlin (and so many others along the way) have selflessly given their time and energy to mentor me and encourage me to pursue that which I love. These professors have exhibited the Ignatian ideal of being *Men for Others*. I hope that I too may be able to follow in their footsteps and give to future generations of students that which they gave to me."

After graduating, Sullivan will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Physics, hoping to become a professional researcher in gravitational physics and study unique astrophysical phenomena that can be observed with the new techniques of gravitational wave astronomy. Likewise, Manduca plans to obtain a Ph.D. in Astronautical Engineering, looking to begin a career conducting research and innovating in the fields of astronautics and spacecraft navigation.



## Juniors Reach Finals In Investment Competition

In January, a team of Regis juniors was selected as regional finalists in the Wharton Global High School Investment Competition. Representing Regis as Owl Investments, the five Regians were one of just 50 teams recognized from roughly 1,000 competitors across the globe for the strength and creativity of their investment strategies.

Hosted by the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, The Wharton Global High School Investment Competition is a 12-week challenge in which students compete to win the chance to manage the wealth of a potential client. Presented with a case study, teams must create a compelling and creative long-term strategy, with some additional short-term goals. Along the way, students learn investing concepts and buy stocks for their portfolio using an online simulator.

"I've always been interested in learning about finance, and so since there weren't a lot of activities going on this summer, I took some online business-related courses, and I knew many of my friends were interested in finance too and doing similar things," Team Captain for Owl Investments Samuel Ngiam '22 said. "In terms of why we entered this competition in particular, it's judged based on your investment strategy. Most competitions give you a time period to invest and then you win based on how much money you make, whereas this competition is more about what you've learned and the thought process behind the stocks, and so we thought it would be a better learning experience for us."

Following the end of 10 weeks of trading, each team is required to submit a report detailing its recommended investment strategy, analytical approach, and competition journey. Owl Investments was one of 20 finalists selected from the United States. Joining Ngiam on Owl Investments were Donovan Barcelona '22, Julien Jerkovich '22, Andrew Kwok '22, and Aidan Slovinski '22.

"There were a lot of teams that ended up entering the competition," Barcelona said about the accomplishment of getting to the regional finals. "These are teams from all over the world, so when you look at it in the grand scheme of things, we were able to essentially compete with the best."

## Regions Participate in Inaugural Jesuit Global Activism Leadership Summit

Last month, a contingent of Regions represented the United States in the inaugural Jesuit Global Activism Leadership Summit. Preston Ferraiuolo '22, David Ordonez '22, and Hugh Kane '23, alongside Theology Department Chair Maura Toomb Estevez, joined with 18 other Jesuit schools around the world to discuss contemporary issues facing societies today and envision solutions to the injustices faced by our global community.

Sponsored by St. Louis University High School in St. Louis, Missouri, the three-day summit was created in the Jesuit spirit of being called to the frontiers to live among and serve our neighbors near and far. Focusing on three specific goals, Zero Hunger, Gender Equality, and Affordable & Clean Energy, participants worked in mixed groups to develop an action plan to address their assigned issue in their respective home countries. The summit concluded with final presentations and the opportunity to further share cultural perspectives and ideas for a more united, just world.

"For me, it was surreal to have discussions at the same time with kids I would never meet," said Ferraiuolo, who took part in the Affordable & Clean Energy group. "Hearing those perspectives, it underscores that we're all in this together. It's not just going to affect one country, it was reinforced that this is a global problem that everyone feels." Ordonez expressed similar feelings from his conversations in his Gender Equality group and throughout the summit. "I think we've all seen how poverty, gender inequality, and the environmental crisis have affected not only us, but the whole world," said Ordonez, "so the chance to get to work on these real life issues is just an incredible experience."

While the inaugural summit was conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the students are eager to participate in next year's event, which hopes to invite U.S and international delegations to St. Louis for broader conversations. "I am very much looking forward to next year's event, as the summit provided not only an opportunity to get to know other students around the world, but also to learn from them," Kane said.

## Language Department Chair David Bonagura '99 Publishes *Staying with the Catholic Church*

In February, Scepter Publishers released the second book by David Bonagura '99, entitled *Staying with the Catholic Church: Trusting God's Plan of Salvation*. The book articulates the mission of the Catholic Church and why we need her as we navigate the challenges of the modern world.

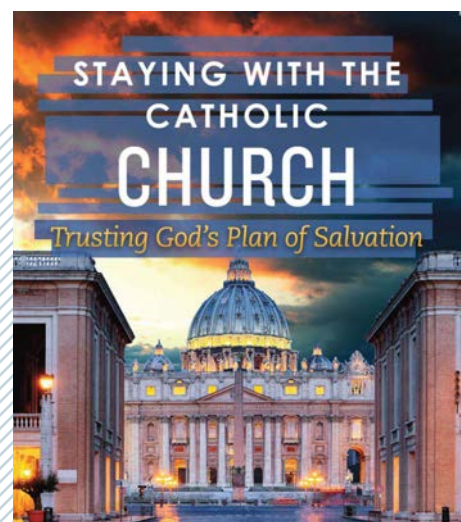
"I wrote the book because people are always asking about the Church," explained Bonagura, chairman of the Language Department and teacher of Latin and Theology. "Catholics have an intuitive grasp of God, of the incarnation, and of the sacraments. But they tend to have difficulty understanding where the Church fits in with God's plan, and how their parish that they attend each week is tied into a global entity. This book explains how the Church is the necessary means through which we are connected directly to Jesus Christ and through which we receive His grace in the sacraments."

The book contains six chapters, each of which takes its focus from common questions people have about the Church. These questions include what the Church is, why Jesus established her, why she has so many teachings, and what roles lay people have within the Church.

Two years ago, Bonagura released his first book, entitled *Steadfast in Faith: Catholicism and the Challenges of Secularism*, which articulates the nature of faith and belief in a world that is increasingly turning its back on God.

Bonagura credits his Regis education with giving him a start as a writer. "I first attempted to write a book when I was eleven years old," Bonagura joked. "When I came to Regis, I wrote for *The Owl*; I loved to write the articles about the cross country and track teams, which, in typical Regian fashion, were all peppered with inside jokes. But I really learned a lot about the writing craft in sophomore English. I still follow one lesson I learned then, and I pass it on to my students when correcting their essays: 'Show, don't tell!' In other words, state your ideas clearly and engage them immediately. Do not write phrases like, 'This line means' or 'This is significant because.' Rather, state what needs to be said without a warm-up. This way, the author's voice can be heard more forcefully."

Both of Bonagura's books are available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).



## Regis Runner Commits to William & Mary

Before the start of Easter Recess, Regis student-athlete Luke Ellwood '21 signed a letter of intent to compete on the Division I track and cross country teams at The College of William & Mary. In a small, socially distant signing day ceremony in the Regis gymnasium, family, coaches, and classmates gathered to congratulate Ellwood on his accomplishments as he officially committed to continuing his education and athletic pursuits at college.

"Throughout the past couple of years, I had hoped that the opportunity to have a signing day like this would come to fruition for me, so for it to actually happen was very special," said Ellwood, whose love for the sport came during his first season at Regis. "To be able to have family, teammates, coaches, and faculty in attendance was also very important to me since each of those people has played a crucial role in my success to this point, probably more than many of them even realize."

Ellwood has earned distinct recognition and numerous accolades over his four years running for Regis. He currently holds the school record in the Freshman 1600 meter run, Sophomore 1600 meter run, and the Varsity Indoor 3200 meter run, and stands as the #2 all-time Regis runner on the 2.5 mile cross country course at Van Cortlandt Park. Despite the setbacks brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Ellwood maintained a remarkable senior season, finishing first or second in every league race, cross country competition, and indoor track meet.

"Luke possesses an amazing combination of determination, focus, calm demeanor, good humor, and willingness," David Bonagura '99, Head Coach of Regis' Track and Cross Country teams and Language Department Chair, said. "Just as importantly, he is the greatest teammate anyone could want: he is always encouraging his teammates, and even though he is the fastest guy, he is very much 'one of the guys' at all times. His humility is genuine, and it is inspiring."



## Regions "Visit" Johannesburg For Annual ALAMAU Conference

In March, five Regions took part in the annual African Leadership Academy Model African Union (ALAMAU) conference. The only delegation representing the United States, the students participated in a series of committees and deliberations, determining solutions to address some of the most pressing issues facing the African continent.

Hosted virtually this year, ALAMAU is an annual conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa that provides young leaders a platform to practice international diplomacy by assuming the roles of African leaders. An almost entirely student-driven conference, ALAMAU seeks to bring together diverse groups of teenagers interested in global affairs and African development, providing them the resources and skills needed to become the next generation of changemakers.

Regions Brian Mhando '22, Sebastian Huerta '22, Christopher Chan '22, Wilkin de los Santos '22, and Julius Dorsey '23 took part in the four-day conference, and were joined by REACH Assistant Director Alan Garcia '08 as their delegation's moderator. The theme of this year's conference, An Africa United: Fostering Resilience Post-COVID-19, challenged the students to think critically about what life in Africa after the pandemic should look like, with specific regard towards technological advancements, bolstering economic systems, strengthening governing structures, and advancing continental unity. Mhando, Huerta, and Dorsey each won an award and recognition for their contributions throughout the conference.

"Initially, I was apprehensive about interacting with people a world away, fearful of how they would perceive me and my views, but once I began speaking with the students and coordinators, those fears melted away," said Huerta, who won Best Position Paper for his piece on current human rights abuses in Ethiopia. "Each person brought a unique perspective, and I was able to have great conversations with other teens."

Despite being unable to travel to Johannesburg this year, the team of Regions developed important skills in rhetoric, teambuilding, leadership, and analysis in their engagement with other students across the globe. They remain excited for the opportunity to visit South Africa next year and participate in future ALAMAU conferences.



## Regions “Brave The Shave” To Fight Against Childhood Cancer

On Friday, February 26, students, faculty, and staff participated in the 10th Annual St. Baldrick's head-shaving event. Hosted by Catalyst, Regis' Christian Service club, the event raised money in the fight against childhood cancer, and encouraged members of the community to “brave the shave” and stand in solidarity with those impacted by the disease.

The St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven charity committed to funding the most promising research to find cures for childhood cancers and give survivors long, healthy lives. Worldwide, 300,000 children are diagnosed with cancer each year, and in the U.S., more children die of childhood cancer than any other disease. Because children with cancer often lose their hair during treatment, “shavees” for the St. Baldrick's Foundation show their support by shaving their heads voluntarily, with the hope of inspiring friends and family to donate money to support childhood cancer research.

Hosted virtually this year, those shaving their heads gathered in a Zoom webinar, where one-by-one participants were brought to the virtual stage to shave their heads live. Fellow Regions cheered on throughout the event, and were invited to donate directly to the St. Baldrick's Foundation in lieu of, or in addition to, shaving their heads.

“St. Baldrick's has been a Regis tradition for the last 10 years, and has become an event I have looked forward to every year,” said Sebastian Cardena '22, who helped coordinate the day's activities. “Upon seeing that Catalyst had struggled with service opportunities in the last year, we decided that we should try to continue this act of humility and generosity into this new online world, hoping that we could raise awareness and facilitate solidarity among the Regis community.”

## Regis Junior To Conduct Scientific Research Through Prestigious Mentorship Program

Brian Mhando '22 was accepted into the prestigious Regeneron High School Mentorship Program. Working alongside scientists at Regeneron headquarters this summer, Brian will work both inside and outside the lab to develop the scientific knowledge and critical thinking skills needed to conduct cutting-edge research.

Hosting one of the most selective high school science summer programs in the country, Regeneron recognizes the need to encourage, inspire, and train the next generation of student scientists. Students from across the country are invited to Regeneron headquarters for a six-to-seven week intensive program, where they are matched with top scientists in their field to serve as their mentors for the duration of the program.

“I heard about the internship through an aunt of a freshman, who funnily enough I met during the Regis Entrance Exam Day two years ago,” Mhando said. “The application process was challenging, but manageable. Not only did I need a teacher recommendation, but I had to answer a few short essay questions that tested my interest in science. There were also two interviews: one with a scientist, and one self-interview.”

Several Regis faculty and staff assisted Mhando throughout the application and interview process, including Mr. Eric DiMichele, Mr. Xavier Simon '05, Mr. Kurt Thiemann, and Dr. Stefano Cascapera, who provided Mhando with an array of scientific articles that helped him identify his scientific interests. “I didn't have the pleasure of teaching Brian in Chemistry when he was a sophomore, but his love for science and his wish to know more were the spark that

started the adventure to Regeneron,” said Cascapera. “We are all so happy and so proud of Brian. Our students are our future, and we are looking forward to having the same feeling for many other Regions in the months and years to come.”

A leader in biotechnology that has invested in lifesaving medicines for people with serious diseases for over 30 years, Regeneron has earned particularly widespread praise recently for its COVID-19 research. In November, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted approval for the company's antibody cocktail, which has proven effective in the treatment of mild-to-moderate coronavirus cases in adults and children.

“I hope that this internship will help me gauge my interests in science,” Mhando said. “Although I am not sure what I want to do yet in college, I know that I love science, and hopefully not only do I find a potential career through this program, but I get to learn more about the research process in one of the most elite research facilities in the country.”







# Safety First

## How Regis Ran Its Own COVID-19 Testing Lab

When Regis High School transitioned to hybrid instruction to start the second trimester, the school implemented many health and safety protocols that have become common during the pandemic: daily health screenings, temperature checks, masks, properly distanced classrooms, and an internal contact tracing system, to name a few. But the Regis auditorium also became home to something you won't find at many high schools: a certified COVID-19 testing laboratory that could process on-demand rapid tests for students, faculty, and staff. Thanks to the hard work and ingenuity of Regis faculty, staff, and students, as well as the expertise and generosity of several alumni and parents, this complex operation allowed the school to operate effectively throughout the winter and spring with the confidence that there was no active transmission of COVID-19 inside our historic building.

Once the school decided to shift away from fully remote instruction, the desire for regular, random testing of the school community was clear, but the ideal approach was not. Several different COVID-19 tests have been developed during the pandemic with varying levels of effectiveness, cost, and ease of use. Researching which test to use and which external laboratory to partner with created many choices and variables, and the Regis administration was committed to making the most informed decision possible.

“There were a lot of options out there,” Vice President for Operations Joseph Amatrucola, who led the effort, said. “We felt that it was important for the safety of our students, as well as for our parents, faculty, and staff, to know we were going to be keeping them as safe as possible.”

After much consideration, as well as consultation with Dr. Anthony Fauci '58, onsite testing via the Abbott BinaxNOW™ rapid test emerged as the best potential option. Reliable, affordable, and compact, the Abbott test produces accurate results in 15 minutes, optimizing the school's testing procedures and providing peace of mind to users throughout the day. But the path forward remained murky. At the time these tests were scarce, and Regis still needed to identify a reliable and affordable laboratory to perform and process the tests. “The bottom line is that it was so new and unavailable to the common organization that it was just not accessible,” Amatrucola said.

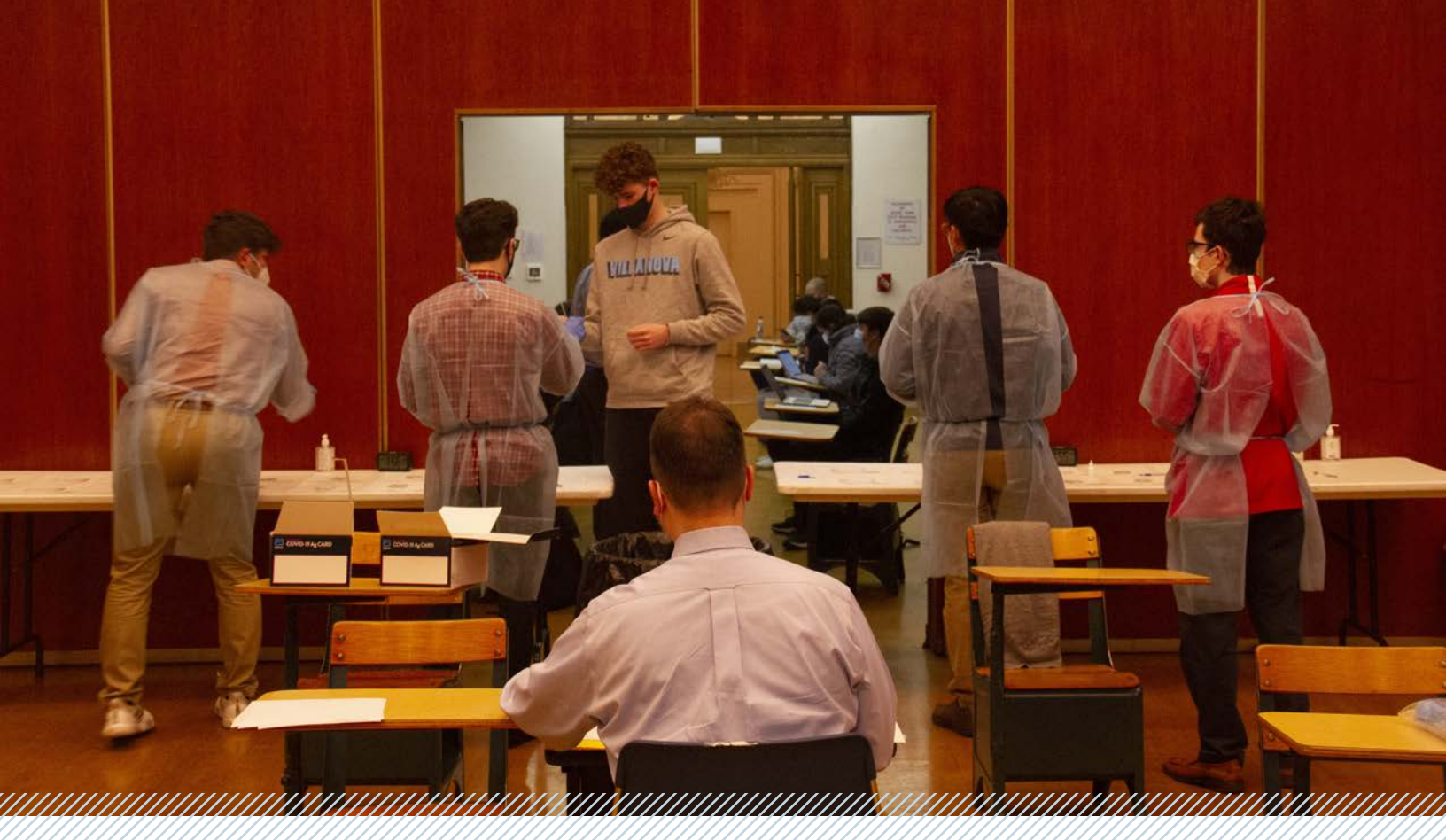
A Regis parent helped solve the problem. Dr. Kathryn Hutchinson P'18'22, Vice President for the Division of Student Affairs at St. John's University, had advised Amatrucola last summer as Regis worked to determine

proper COVID-19 protocols. As Regis looked for a testing solution, Dr. Hutchinson again proved invaluable. In addition to offering the school the opportunity to purchase extra Abbott tests that St. John's had, she assured Amatrucola that Regis could pull off its own onsite testing operation without the complexity and added expense of an outside laboratory.

“Use of the Abbott Binax antigen test for surveillance testing on campus has afforded St. John's the opportunity to provide weekly testing to our community, resulting in thousands of tests completed each month,” Hutchinson said. “We are proud that not one member of the clinical testing team has contracted COVID-19 from doing this important work. Therefore, I was confident that by following all safety protocols, those engaged in the implementation of the testing program at Regis would also remain healthy. Regis is a special place showing extraordinary dedication to our sons even in the midst of a global pandemic, and creating testing capacity onsite is next level and certainly should make Dr. Fauci proud!”

With the access to testing kits now solidified and the encouragement of Dr. Hutchinson, Regis began pursuing the remaining steps necessary to run its own testing facility. In compliance with guidelines to operate a certified clinical laboratory in the state of New York, the school needed to identify a Lab Director to oversee the lab's operation and ensure compliance with regulations. As soon as the opportunity was presented to him, board-certified OBGYN Dr. Kevin Jovanovic P'22 eagerly signed on, assisting with training staff and advising dry runs of the lab before the project officially debuted in the building. “When I was asked, I was honored to be involved in any way I can for Regis,” Dr. Jovanovic said. “Regis' mission





of *Men for Others* is such a gift for the young men who attend. My son, Luke, loves the school and has benefited so much. I am happy I can give something in return.” In addition to Dr. Jovanovic, Dr. Christopher Bandera '06, a pediatrician, signed on to serve as the prescribing physician for the school's COVID-19 tests, a final administrative piece that allowed the Regis lab to launch.

Starting the week of February 1, Regis began testing roughly 20% of its in-person population. For the individuals being tested, the process was simple: arrive in the auditorium at your scheduled time, receive a nasal swab and swab each nostril, turn in your swab, and wait 15 minutes to receive an email with the result of your test.

For the faculty and staff who volunteered their time and knowledge to maintain the lab's day-to-day responsibilities, it was more complicated. Assistant Principal for Student Life Christian Mariano '99 maintained a record of tests administered, randomly selecting approximately 50 individuals to be rapid tested each week. Science Department Chair Dr. Stefano Cascapera and English Teacher William Hanlon '04 served as laboratory technicians, and Mathematics Teacher Meghan Kiernan and Director of the REACH Program Doug Eickman '05 logged patient information and testing data in an online database developed by the Regis IT department. Director of Information Technology Jose Machuca '92 was instrumental in reporting results to the Department of Health. Joining the adult volunteers, several students from Regis' Medical Science Club assisted in the lab, their service seen as a unique opportunity for students to learn valuable scientific skills. “Students' participation in the lab is essential, and the benefits of their work go both ways,” Dr. Cascapera said. “Students are on the front line in the effort to keep Regis safe, using the latest tools to screen subjects for COVID-19. Being part of the lab helps enrich our students' educational experiences by showing them the real-life applications of theories that they are learning in class.”

Volunteering their Monday mornings every week, Benjamin Kaiserman '22, Alexander Greene '22, Alexander Graber '23, Jaden Oh '22, and Christopher Tomeo '22 fulfilled several lab duties as necessary, eager to explore their career interests and passions for science. “It's really exciting to be able to apply my freshman biology class knowledge to the real world,” said Oh, whose responsibilities in the lab included processing tests, entering test results in the Regis database, and acting as a second observer to confirm the results of each test. “We learned about how viruses replicate quickly in the human body, and the different types that they were distinguished into based on their genetic material and modes of replication. With this information, I feel that I have a firmer knowledge of how and why the rapid tests were designed in the way they were. I would certainly say the experience has enriched my scientific understanding, even out of the classroom.”

While weekly random testing was the primary focus of the Regis laboratory, the infrastructure in place allowed for several additional applications. For example, students and chaperones were tested for COVID-19 prior to departing for in-person retreats and in advance of the senior dinner cruise on the Hudson (in place of Senior Prom). In addition, if anyone in the building developed systems suggestive of COVID-19, on-demand tests were available to the school nurse and results were immediate. While everyone at Regis looks forward to a more typical academic year in 2021-22, the administration knows that the Regis High School Clinical Laboratory will continue to play an important role to keep the school community safe.

“I'm really proud of the process we went through and the tremendous amount of support from every angle,” said Amatrucola, who expressed thanks to the many individuals, including Dr. Hutchinson, Dr. Jovanovic, Dr. Bandera, Dr. Fauci, and all the staff and students who played a role in bringing a full-fledged, certified testing facility to 84th Street.

When Fr. Mike Rizzo '77 preaches, new members of his parish sometimes end up with confused looks on their faces. It's not because Fr. Rizzo's homilies are esoteric or unapproachable. Catholics just aren't used to a priest telling a story about his wife or his son to begin his sermon.

# Retiring *to the* Priesthood

On June 6, 2020, Bishop Kevin Vann ordained four new priests for the Diocese of Orange at Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. Michael J. Rizzo, a 60-year-old widower, father, and business executive, was among them and now serves as a parochial vicar at Saints Simon and Jude Catholic Church in Huntington Beach.

"I retired to the priesthood," Fr. Rizzo jokes.

It's a busy retirement. Masses, baptisms, weddings, funerals, counseling sessions, ministering to the sick, and the many other varied responsibilities of a parish priest pack his schedule. But Fr. Rizzo is thrilled with this radically new stage of his life, and his journey to this holy calling is as inspiring as it is unusual.

In one sense, Fr. Rizzo's path to the priesthood began on the worst day of his life. His beloved wife, Rosemary, a two-time cancer survivor, died unexpectedly of a heart attack at their home in Lake Oswego, Oregon on February 28, 2012. Her passing devastated Mike and their son, John, who was in the middle of his freshman year at Claremont McKenna College. Mike had planned to retire soon after a successful career in business, and he and Rosemary were looking forward to traveling and eventually moving close to wherever John settled after college.

"We had a plan, and I didn't have any independent plan," Fr. Rizzo says. "It was all part of my wife and I as a team in this plan, and so that plan was obviously shot."

Still, in the aftermath of Rosemary's death, the thought of entering the priesthood had not entered his mind. But the seed had been planted much earlier.

Mike Rizzo grew up on Staten Island in a service-oriented, Catholic family. His father worked as a New York City firefighter, and his mother eventually joined the New York City Police Department as a civilian employee. He credits his mother with pushing him to consider Regis after the principal at St. Teresa's recommended he apply. The decision to make the 90-minute commute each morning and evening completely changed his trajectory, Fr. Rizzo says. "Everything in my life really started with the opportunity that I had at Regis."

Regis also deepened Rizzo's faith. The Theology curriculum — a far cry from the religion courses he took in Catholic grammar school — expanded his understanding of and intellectual engagement with Catholicism, and he has wonderful, vivid memories of school retreats. In between classes, he used to duck into the empty Chapel of the Sacred Heart to play the organ. But during his time on 84th Street, Rizzo never felt pulled to the priesthood. His mind was set on becoming a lawyer.

Rizzo went on to Cornell and then the University of Michigan Law School. He began his legal career in New York and married Rosemary. The couple initially struggled to have children, and in the early 1990s, Rizzo started to have conversations about becoming a deacon. But soon Rosemary became pregnant with John, and the bank Rizzo worked for promoted



him to a position that required the family to relocate to Oregon. With a new baby, a busy job, and a move to the west coast, any plans to get more involved with the Church had to be placed on hold.

Rizzo went on to great success in his professional career, becoming president and chief operating officer of a subsidiary of US Bank and later the general counsel and chief operating officer of ALEKS, an online adaptive learning service. As he began to contemplate retirement with Rosemary, Rizzo again briefly entertained the idea of becoming a deacon before Rosemary passed away, at which point his focus became the well being of his son.

Eventually, Rizzo found himself feeling unfulfilled at work for the first time in his career. He decided to undertake something he had always wanted to try but never could carve out time for: the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. His professional responsibilities prevented him from doing a full 30-day retreat, but Rizzo signed up for a weekly program at a local parish. At one point during the Exercises, he found himself, for the first time in his life, feeling the urge to become a priest. He quickly dismissed the notion as ridiculous.

"I'm old," Rizzo told himself. "I'm not very holy. The extent of my holiness was I went to Mass my whole life."

Still, he felt spiritually renewed by the Exercises, so he decided to do them again. On his second go-round, the call to become a priest grew even stronger. Rizzo brought this up to the priest leading the Exercises, expecting him to agree that the idea was silly. "You need to pursue that," the priest told him. (Read more about the impact the Spiritual Exercises had on Fr. Rizzo in the article that follows this one.)

So he did. After much prayer and ensuring his son felt comfortable with the decision, Rizzo entered the seminary, diving into his studies and formational training. "Honestly, if you ever get the chance, the seminary is like a six-year sabbatical," Fr. Rizzo jokes. "I loved it." Of course, he wasn't a typical seminarian. Twice the age of most of his peers, he served at times as a father figure to the young seminarians, offering advice based on his much more substantial life experiences. He also often found himself advising the rector on legal questions or human resources issues facing the seminary.

He graduated from the seminary in May 2020, was ordained the following month, and began his ministry at Sts. Simon and Jude. Any lingering doubts about his atypical midlife career change quickly dissipated. "It is astonishingly comfortable," Fr. Rizzo says. "It's like I was made for it. I don't know how you say that without sounding arrogant. I'm not, but it just feels right."

While Fr. Rizzo doesn't have as much experience in ministry as most priests his age, he brings to his new vocation a depth of life experience that he constantly draws upon while serving his parishioners. When he counsels a couple struggling in their marriage or one preparing to be married, he cites examples from his relationship with Rosemary. When



he ministers to the sick or comforts the bereaved, he remembers his wife's battles with cancer or his own grieving process after her death. And, yes, his homilies regularly feature stories about "my wife" and "my son," which by now most regular church-goers in the parish have come to expect.

"I don't quote St. Thomas Aquinas in my homilies," Fr. Rizzo explains. "I am a down to earth guy who preaches the way I wanted to be preached to when I was sitting in the pews. I draw connections to every element of my life."

Almost a decade after Rosemary's passing, Fr. Rizzo loves this new stage of his life. He trusts that his wife is in heaven, he lives a short drive from his son and daughter-in-law, and he feels invigorated and fulfilled by his ministry.

"It's just a pleasure to do what I do, and I don't think it's sort of the new car smell of this. I think it's actually that I really like this, and I can't fathom not liking it."

Ask him about the future, and Fr. Rizzo, referencing his father's work for the FDNY, talks about engaging in active ministry for at least 20 years before eventually slowing down and spending more time with his family.

"I can put my 20 in, work until I'm 80, and still enjoy my grandkids," Fr. Rizzo says. "God blessed me to do that, and that will have been a pretty amazing end to my working career."

Amen.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY

# The Fourth Day

## HOW THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS CHANGED MY LIFE

*By Fr. Michael J. Rizzo '77*

One of the great lessons of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola is that we must recognize just how small and sinful we are before we can appreciate how great our Lord is. Given that, it is rather awkward to be featured in a magazine that is read by thousands of men who are far smarter and far more successful than I. Even more awkward is presuming that I actually have something of value to share regarding my experience with the Exercises. However, as a Man for Others, I'm compelled to respond favorably when asked for assistance.

Prior to 2012, participating in the Exercises was a rather unrealistic dream. I was a husband, father, lawyer, and banking executive. There was no way that I could be completely out of touch for 30 days. However, in August, 2012, about six months after my wife passed away, I discovered that a nearby parish was offering a "19th Annotation" version of the Exercises commonly referred to as "Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life." For those Jesuits and others who have participated in a 30-day retreat, this version of the Exercises might be also called "Exercises Light," but the weekly format was the best that I could hope for given my work schedule. I simply prayed that I would derive some value from this attempt at deepening my spirituality. Little did I know that this spiritual journey would radically change my life.

In the opening stages of the Exercises, I was captivated by the notion that all sin, even sin that is theoretically "private," has a social consequence. I had always regarded myself as a "good" husband, father, son, friend, and overall Catholic. Yet, I was challenged to examine my life far more critically and objectively than ever before. This culminated in a "General Confession" during which I was required to re-confess (or to confess for the first time) every sin that I could recall since I achieved the age of reason in 1966. Suffice it to say, examining more than 45 years of my life was a daunting, depressing, and disappointing task. I wasn't very happy with my many faults and flaws. I was especially unhappy with having to read a list of these sins during the sacrament of Confession. Yet, giving St. Ignatius his due, the end result of the process was that, for the first time, I was completely free to become the man that God intended me to be.

So, when the topic in a later week was the "Call of the King," I was astounded by the impact that it had on me. My mind was continually

drawn to the concept that I was being called to be a priest. In other words, I sensed that my King needed me and I was being asked to respond. Of course, I thought the whole notion was completely ridiculous. After all, I was 53 years old; I was not in the least "holy enough" to presume to be a priest; I had an amazing son, a fine career, and, notwithstanding the absence of my wife (who I was certain was with God for eternity), a very blessed life. There was no possible way that the King was calling me. It had to be a spammer or a wrong number. Nonetheless, the nagging call persisted.

When I completed the Exercises in early November, I felt spiritually renewed. But, I also felt that I could really benefit from going through them again to see if I might learn even more. To be honest, I was also really struck by the priest who led the Exercises. He was a very holy, very down to earth guy from New York who was truly inspiring. So, I signed up again.

My second time through, I was able to go much deeper and to understand things at a more profound level. I didn't need to make another General Confession, but I certainly remembered how it felt the first time. There was only one problem: The call of the King was louder and more persistent than before. Because I was having a very hard time ignoring that call, I thought that I should speak with the leader of the Exercises (my New York priest "friend") who I was certain would tell me that I was clearly out of my mind and that I should dismiss such a crazy notion. I think that's all it would have taken to send me on my way without giving the priesthood another thought. Imagine my surprise when I explained my situation to him and he very enthusiastically said, "You need to pursue that." When I emphatically said, "But, Father, I'm 53 years old." He responded, "God knows how old you are. You should pursue this." My journey to priesthood began the very next day. Did I mention that he was inspirational?

Suffice it to say that the Exercises opened my heart and mind to a truly radical change in my life. They helped me to hear God's call and to respond to it. They helped me through my long discernment and formation process and they continue to be a powerful influence in my life as a priest. In fact, my devotion to Ignatian Spirituality (as a result of the Exercises) often prompts people ask me if I am a Jesuit priest. For me, that is the highest compliment that anyone could ever pay me.

# Regis' First Rhodes Scholar



Brian Reyes '17 didn't go to Yale dreaming of becoming a Rhodes Scholar. He didn't choose his summer internships or his extracurricular activities based on how they would look on a Rhodes application. It just wasn't on his radar or in his plans.

At Yale, Reyes threw himself into the subjects he felt passionately about and devoted his time outside of the classroom to supporting organizations whose missions he deeply believed in. Ironically, it was that intense focus on what he genuinely cared about — not what he thought would look good on a resume — that led to Reyes becoming the first Regis alumnus to win a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship.

"I really did not think I would win until I won it," Reyes said after being selected in November as one of 32 students in the American Rhodes Scholar Class of 2021. "Up until even after I interviewed, I didn't think I was going to get it."

Winning the most renowned scholarship in the academic world may have been unexpected, but it also was well earned. The Rhodes Scholarship is a testament to Reyes' brilliance, drive, and desire to serve others. It is also the latest highlight on an inspiring journey that began with his immigrant parents' commitment to his education, continued through his time with the REACH Program and at Regis, and likely will include a future career dedicated to helping underserved communities in the United States.

When Reyes first walked into the UK Fellowships Office during his junior year at Yale, he intended to discuss other, slightly less well-known postgraduate programs. During their conversation, the administrator asked why he wasn't applying for a Rhodes Scholarship. Reyes told her that he didn't think he had a realistic chance of winning one. His perception was that a successful Rhodes application usually involved a demonstrated commitment to or mastery of one specific academic subject or societal issue. Reyes' activities and interests were varied and didn't fit as neatly into one category.

"I just felt like my accomplishments weren't flashy enough," Reyes says. The Yale administrator thought

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Brian Reyes '17 was selected as one of 32 students in the American Rhodes Scholar Class of 2021. Inset: a photo of Reyes during his first year as a student in the REACH Program.

otherwise. “What I think she saw,” Reyes explains, “and what I began to see as I started to write my own personal statement and think about my narrative, was that the common thread running through everything that I had done was a motivation essentially to enhance opportunity and equity.”

As a freshman at Yale, Reyes began volunteering with Connecticut Students for a Dream, a grassroots, statewide organization that focuses on issues facing immigrant communities in the state. He did legislative advocacy work with the group supporting a successful bill that expanded financial aid to undocumented students at Connecticut state colleges. Through the same organization, Reyes worked on a voter registration campaign targeting young people of color in the state. At Prosperity Now, a Washington, D.C.-based anti-poverty organization, Reyes helped research and write policy agendas and authored articles for their blog. He also has been active with La Casa Cultural, Yale’s cultural center for Latino students, and was the co-president of the school’s Dominican Students Association.

The motivation for all of this work stems partially from a specific interaction Reyes had with his father after receiving his letter of admission to Yale. His father, who came to the United States from the Dominican Republic as a teenager and drives a truck for the Coca-Cola Company, told Reyes that despite the country’s flaws his amazing achievement only could have happened in America. While he shared in his father’s excitement, Reyes also in the moment thought about all those from similar backgrounds and with similar stories who would never achieve the same American dream. His advocacy work in college, though varied, all centered around improving the experiences in the United States for people from underserved communities.

“Even though it was somewhat disparate, it was all driven by that vision of trying to care for people who are just generally voiceless in the U.S. and trying to advocate for their welfare in spaces where they otherwise wouldn’t be,” Reyes says.

This vision, along with his stellar academic record, became the central focus of Reyes’ Rhodes application. After participating in the first-ever virtual selection process due to the pandemic, Reyes found out in a Zoom room that he was one of two students from his New York district being offered the sought-after scholarship to study for two years at Oxford.

As the shock of this news wore off, it quickly gave way to gratitude. “The phrase that came to mind immediately after winning it was, ‘It takes a village,’” Reyes says. “Because it truly, truly did for me.”

The most important figures in that village are his parents, immigrants from the Dominican Republic who prioritized his education. Growing up in East Harlem and then the Bronx, Reyes attended St. Ann School in Harlem and, in the summer before sixth grade, joined the REACH Program, where he spent the next three years undergoing intense academic preparation and leadership formation in the hopes of earning a scholarship to a Catholic high school. At REACH, Reyes also found models for how he would like to lead his life in the form of the Regis staff members who run the program.

“The first institution that really showed me adults living their lives fully committed to some vision of the common good was REACH,” Reyes,

who went on to work at REACH throughout high school, says. “They focused their lives on helping me and other people like me, and I think that realization that that goodness in people existed, and that you can make some sort of profession out of that, I think that was one of my core motivating factors when as a high school student I decided that social justice, in broad terms, would be the thing that I would devote my life to.”

Reyes excelled academically at Regis. He attributes much of his success in the classroom at Yale to the foundation laid on 84th Street, saying that he was surprised when some of his freshman courses in college felt easier than the classes he had taken in high school. The Regis community also played a pivotal role in helping Reyes win the Rhodes Scholarship. After Reyes found out he was a finalist for the scholarship, Regis Director of Admissions Eric DiMichele connected him with John Calhoun ’05 and Ben Buchanan ’08, both of whom won Marshall Scholarships and had gone through the Rhodes application process. Reyes says that their advice proved invaluable.

During his time at Regis, Reyes also saw imperfections and has worked to help the school improve. At times, Reyes didn’t feel like he fit in at the school, and he watched some of his REACH classmates and other friends struggle academically and socially. Reyes and classmate Tobi Ayeni ’17 undertook a project during their senior year to study how Regis could attract more students of color and first-generation students from low-income families and ensure that these students feel fully supported and comfortable at the school. He has continued this work during college, serving on the Admissions and Recruitment task force of the Race at Regis Initiative and as a leader of Heritage Club Alumni, a group of Black and Latino alumni who meet regularly and have supported the school in its efforts to address and prevent racism at Regis. (A feature story on this group will be published in the next issue of this magazine.)

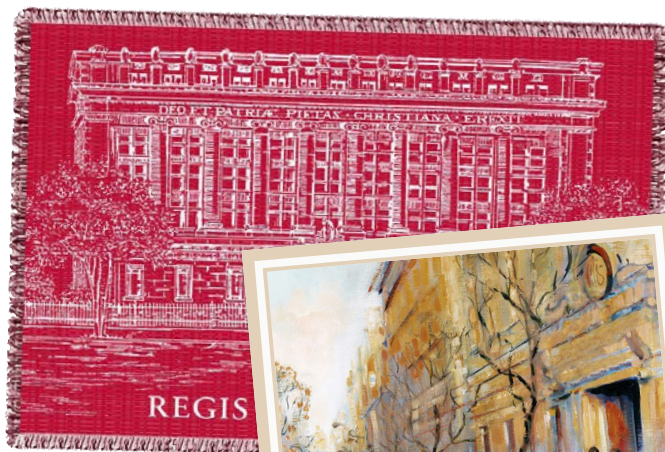
“Regis has a lot of potential to change lives,” Reyes says. “Because I know it changed mine.”

Reyes will bring his passion for serving others to Oxford, where he plans to pursue a two-year Master of Philosophy degree in comparative social policy. He hopes that the experience will allow him to return to the United States with a repertoire of policy ideas from around the globe that will allow him to be open-minded and innovative in his future professional work. While he doesn’t know the exact form that future career will take, he is confident it will focus on seeking to help marginalized communities experience and believe in the same American dream his father spoke of four years ago.

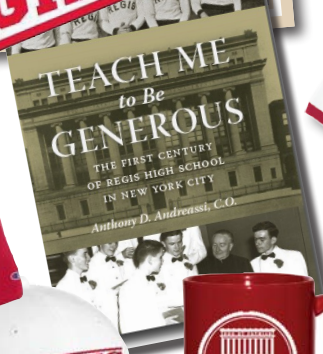
“I think my task, as I go through this very elite and very connected world, will be always to keep in mind that original memory of my father and that grounding reason of why I do what I do,” Reyes says. “I’ve been granted this opportunity that will allow me to walk spaces that by the luck of the draw my father will not be able to walk, despite him being a very intelligent and capable man, and I just have to make sure that I honor him, and my mother as well, in how I use that access.”



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# Events Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

- 7 Freshman Family Welcome
- 8 Sophomore Family Welcome
- 10 Mass of the Holy Spirit
- 25 50th Reunion for the Class of 1971

## OCTOBER

- 2 25th Reunion for the Class of 1996
- 13 Freshman Parent Reception
- 15 JUG Night
- 16 25th Reunion for the Class of 1995
- 23 50th Reunion for the Class of 1970

## NOVEMBER

- 3 Deo Et Patriae Reception

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Regis events have been reimagined or rescheduled. Please visit [regis.org/events](https://regis.org/events) for the most up-to-date information.



# REGIS HIGH SCHOOL

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