



DE LA SALLE HIGH SCHOOL

A LEGACY OF LASALLIAN EDUCATION ON THE AVENUE SINCE 1949

"God has chosen and called us to take the place of Jesus the Good Shepherd and to do His work. It is our vocation to represent Jesus Christ Himself. It is no distortion of the Founder's thought to say that it is our vocation to re-present Jesus Christ--to make Him present again: 'He wants your [students] to see Him in you and receive your teaching as if He were teaching them.' Our charism in the Church is to make the loving and saving presence of Jesus Christ a visible and effective reality in the world of education, in the world of the young."--

Brother John Johnston, FSC, "Living Authentically in Christ Jesus, p. 30.



President's Page: Summary of the 2016-2017 School Year

July 3, 2017

What a year we have had at De La Salle High School in 2016-2017! As I sit here on Saturday, July 1 to reflect and to compose this end of year article in the library of Manhattan College during my second year at the two-week Buttimer Institute for Lasallian Studies, I am amazed at how much God has blessed us throughout the entire school year. I have the joyful privilege and responsibility as president to share the highlights of our year's blessings with you.



To assist me in accurately recalling the highlights on 2016-2017, I used a portion of my leadership team's end of year workshop on June 8 for each of us to share our choices for the "Top Ten" at De La Salle during 2016-2017.

But before I delve into those highlights for you, I did not want to gloss over what occurred at De La Salle during what many high school administrators refer to as the "90 days of April and May." My purpose in sharing these items with you is to paint as accurate a picture as possible of the "lively" conclusion of a De La Salle High School year. After you finish reading the list, you should

have a better understanding of why we say the "90 days of April and May."

In addition to all of the usual day-to-day of a typical month during a school year, April provided us with fond memories of the following events: our marching band's trip to Colorado Springs; the final performances of the play, "And Then There Were None"; our National Honor Society Induction; the Senior Parent meeting; our final Junior Retreat; Career Day; an Easter prayer service; spring sports' games and playoffs; International Day; the Junior-Senior Prom; the Board of Regents' Edge Fund Dinner; two orientation meetings for the parents of new students in 17-18; and Senior Fun Day.



Not to be outdone by April, the month of May kicked into an even higher gear with the the following events: Brothers' Day; Givenola Day; our Band Concert; the Athletic Banquet; Senior Breakfast; CCSCC's final meeting at DLS; the Band Awards ceremony; our Underclassmen Awards ceremony; the Spring Football game vs. Jesuit (Our Cavaliers won.); spring sports playoffs; Founders' Day; Graduation; the ACE Banquet; College Night; Food Truck Friday; the Student Assembly to Honor Dr. Caire; and the Mass and Reception to honor Dr. Caire.



Of course, this listing of April and May is only what I have on my calendar as I compose this article. I'm sure there were others that simply didn't make it into my calendar. Irrespective of whether I have captured them all, we are grateful for all of our "end of year" events that were opportunities for us to celebrate in so many ways as a school community.

And now I turn to what my leadership team and I propose as our "Top Ten" for 2016-2017. You will note that what I include here are more than simply ten items. Seven of us listed our "Top Ten," and only a half-dozen or so showed up on several of our lists. If you do the math, that still leaves us with a list of well over 50 items. I am not going to simply list all of these. I have included those which represent the "highlights of the highlights."



But isn't it wonderful, and aren't we blessed to have so many things for which we are thankful?

After I list the highlights of the "Top Ten" highlights, I will comment on two of them that I believe deserve special attention. What follows is not in any order of importance. However, I have grouped them into the four areas I have used before on several occasions; namely, apostolic, pedagogical, community, and business. It will come as no surprise that the "community" grouping leads the pack, by far. Here you go:

Apostolic: De La Salle's welcoming family atmosphere; the addition of required service hours beginning in 2017-2018 for sophomores and juniors to demonstrate faith in action; and all the good that resulted from this year's One Book for Social Justice project, I Am Malala.

Pedagogical: The ongoing, committed pursuit of integrating STEM into the curriculum; 14 students who qualified for state rally, including 7 who finished first at district rally and 2 who finished first at state rally; additional elective courses in SAT/ACT test prep beginning in 2017-2018; state championships in basketball and wrestling, a record-setting football season, and solid performances---including playoff appearances---in nearly all sports; improvements in the scheduling process for students; dedicated staff members who go the extra mile in so many ways; and Paul Kelly being selected by sports writers as the state boys' basketball coach of the year in 3A.



Business: The creation of an all-encompassing and inclusive budget process; a very successful Board of Regents' Edge Fund Dinner; the creation of a system beginning in 2017-2018 that rewards teachers monetarily for going above and beyond their basic duties as a teacher; faculty and staff receiving a 2% pay increase--the first such pay increase in many years; a vendor review process that resulted in new business relationships in food service and photography; and a board of trustees that understands its proper role, is very supportive of the president, and holds him accountable.

Community: The student assembly, mass, and reception to honor Dr. Caire on the occasion of his retirement from De La Salle; a very successful Open House; the increase in school tours and spend-a-days for potential students; a very special Founders' Day; the creation of the very successful Food Truck Friday event; a very successful graduation event; an increase in the number of alumni participating in events; the creation of a new successful event, Breakfast with Santa; the creation of informational meetings in April for the parents of new students; spirited tailgates before and after football games, especially the one before the semi-final game; and the leadership, transparency, relationship-building, and communication of the new president.



Although I could easily comment extensively on just about all of these 27 listed highlights, I will comment on only two; namely, the assembly, mass, and reception for Dr. Caire and Founders' Day.

As I said at the student assembly (May 18) and the reception (May 25) to honor Dr. Caire, words cannot come close in capturing fully Dr. Caire's 55 years of excellent, devoted, and selfless service to

De La Salle High School. However, I call your attention back to Brother John Johnston's quote that began this article. Before you read further, please go back and read it. I'll wait for you here while you go back and do that..... I say simply and only that Dr. Caire has exemplified everything stated in that quote throughout his 55 years at De La Salle.



To honor Dr. Caire and his exemplary service to De La Salle High School, we have established the Caire Excellence in Lasallian Leadership (CELL) fund.

Donations made to this fund will be used to advance those areas in which Dr. Caire demonstrated his excellence; namely, spirituality, academics, athletics, and the arts. Please keep Dr. Caire in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers from recent back surgery.

We celebrated Founders' Day on Friday, May 12, and it was a very special Founders' Day. In my 27 years as an educator, I have never experienced an event as powerful as what occurred on that day. To see our 8th graders each walking side-by-side up the center aisle before mass with a member of the 1967 50th anniversary class was special indeed. And what made the event even more special was the fact that Richard Saizan was in attendance as a member of the class of 1967. Richard is the first African-American graduate of De La Salle High School. After receiving his "golden diploma," Richard offered some brief but powerful comments about his time at De La Salle and about how his time at De La Salle prepared him for his career and life after high school. And what made it even more special was that the mass was celebrated by Archbishop Rodi, a member himself of the class of 1967. It was indeed a very special day.



Yes, we have had much about which to be thankful in the 2016-2017 school year. And we look forward to many more blessings with God's grace in 2017-2018. As I close, and as a community, we say good-bye to three members of our school community who have passed away and who are now in God's loving embrace. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Leon Castagne', a 2017 graduate of De La Salle, Jim Hanley, a faculty member at De La Salle for 42 years, and Dr. Eamon Kelly, who was a wonderful supporter of De La Salle. Leon's older brother, Quentin, is an alumnus of De La Salle. Jim Hanley's son, Jim, is an alumnus of De La Salle. And Dr. Kelly has four sons--Martin, Paul (our principal), Andrew, and Peter--who are alumni, and four grandsons--Kevin, Luke, Stephen, and John. Luke and Stephen are alumni, and John plans on being one in a few years. May Leon,

Jim, and Dr. Kelly rest in the peace of God, and may God be with their families in these difficult times.

St. John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us.

Live, Jesus, in our hearts, forever.

In Him,



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