

The

Spring 2015

Skirmisher

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St. John's Military School

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The Vanier Connection

"Hundreds of young men passing through the gates of St. John's were only able to attend the school and be assured of a more fulfilling life as a result of the support and generosity of Jack and Donna Vanier. Additionally, their many other contributions have also allowed St. John's to continue its mission in both lean and prosperous times."

D. Dale Browning, SJMS Class of 1955



Donna displaying her Muleskinner certificate

The Vanier name dots the SJMS campus like a domino tile. The Vanier Academic Center and the spectacular Jack Vanier Hall (JVH) are beacons among the St. John's physical plant. The Vanier Academic Center was dedicated August 4, 1980, and named for Jack Vanier's parents John and Lesta Vanier at the request of then President Keith G. Duckers. JVH, a \$6 million barracks facility, opened in 2009 replacing Mize Hall.

Longtime St. John's supporters Jack and Donna Vanier of Brookville, Kansas, were named as honorary members of the class of 1955 during commencement weekend at St. John's.

Saturday night following graduation, D. Dale Browning, COL Al Ransom, SJMS staff, and members of the classes of the 1950s met at the Brookville Hotel for a dinner celebrating the 60th anniversary of the class of 1955. Jack and Donna were honored guests and received a framed plaque with a vintage "Old Boy" shield designating them honorary members of the class of 1955.

Owners of the CK Ranch in Brookville, the Vaniers are active philanthropists who have supported many causes. St. John's Military School has benefited in countless ways from the Vanier connection.

The Vanier Family Foundation gives generous support to many organizations. In the Salina community, Jack Vanier has supported the Stiefel Theatre, St. John's Military School, the Salina Community Foundation, and the Episcopal Diocese of Western Kansas.

Internationally known in the livestock industry, Jack Vanier leads CK Ranch in Brookville, which is home to one of the premier registered Horned Hereford lines in the world. Breeding stock from his ranch has been used

to develop herds in Japan, France, South America, South Africa, and elsewhere. He also was active in his family's Gooch Milling Co. until it was sold to Archer Daniels Midland in 1970. He served on the Archer Daniels Midland board from 1978 to 2004.

An active philanthropist, Jack Vanier has supported many community and K-State causes. Jack and Donna are responsible for the largest private donation in the history of Kansas State University. The gift provided \$40 million to benefit students, programs, and facilities on both the Manhattan and Salina campuses, and \$20 million for Phase III of the Bill Snyder Family Stadium master plan. Jack and Donna are honorary chairs for the university's Changing Lives campaign. The Vanier family also has supported many K-State programs and colleges, including Kansas State University at Salina, the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, the Terry C. Johnson Center for Basic Cancer Research, Colbert Hills Golf Course, and the colleges of Human Ecology, Agriculture, and Veterinary Medicine.

Donna Vanier has served K-State and the Manhattan and Salina communities in a variety of ways. She has been chair of the board of St. John's Military School and the Salina Regional Health Care Foundation and was a founder of the Salina Community Foundation.

She also has served as treasurer of both Christ Cathedral and the Episcopal Diocese of Western Kansas. In support of her family's ranching interests, she helped form and served as the third president of the American Hereford Association Auxiliary. She served as the chair of the Board of Visitors of K-State's Beach Museum of Art. Her contributions to the museum have been recognized with the naming of one of its galleries in her honor, the Donna Lindsey Vanier Gallery. K-State's athletics department also has benefited from Donna Vanier's efforts. She has served on its Ahearn Athletic



Young Cadet Jack Vanier

“When asked why he continues to support St. John’s Military School like his father before him, Jack explains, “I believe St. John’s is a special place and I believe in the work we do to help young men.”

Scholarship Board since 1992. In addition, she chaired, for more than 15 years, the annual Catbacker Auction, which raises a substantial amount of money to fund K-State athletic scholarships and programs.

Jack and Donna donated the lead gift to the *Every Child Matters* capital campaign which built The Donna L. Vanier Children’s Center in Salina, Kansas. The center was named for Donna because of her interest and love for children everywhere. Throughout her lifetime, Donna has been a champion of those less fortunate.

The recent partnership forged between St. John’s and K-State Salina excites Jack Vanier for the great opportunities it will create for the Cadets. The Vanier family has been essential in the success of both of these storied institutions.

In the mid 1970s, Donna served many terms on the board of the St. John’s Military School Foundation and spent countless hours organizing fund-raising efforts on behalf of the Cadets. Donna became officially involved with SJMS as the coordinator between the school staff and Warner Bros. during the filming of *Up the Academy* in 1980. From that time on, she has worked endlessly serving on many campaign drives and as a member of the Board of Trustees.

All this pales in comparison to the individual personal attention given by Jack and Donna to the Cadets, faculty, and staff at St. John’s. Charter members of the Muleskinner organization, Jack and Donna can be counted on as hole sponsors for the annual golf tournament and generously give to the annual Muleskinner campaign which provides scholarship monies for deserving Cadets.

Worthy Cadets are awarded scholarships named for and provided by Jack and Donna. Donna routinely attends the awards ceremonies eager to meet the recipients of her scholarship.

The Vaniers graciously accept invitations from President E. Andrew England to attend holiday dinners in the Stevens Center and happily dine among the Cadet corps.

Donna visits campus frequently and Jack spent many days in board meetings adding his talents to solve the complex business of running a military school.

The St. John’s organization could hardly exist without the support of the Vanier family and other longtime benefactors.

When JVH was being built, Tim Soule and D. Dale Browning paired to create two movie theaters, a game room, and workout area for the Cadets in the basement of the new barracks!

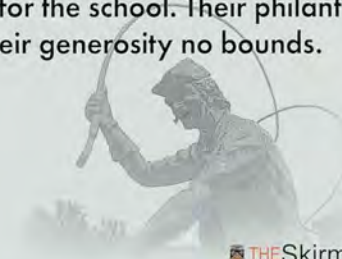
Both Browning and Soule also provide generous scholarship monies that allow deserving Cadets the chance to continue their SJMS education.

Jack, Donna, Tim, and D. Dale all share a common love of St. John’s and tirelessly work behind the scenes to ensure a bright future for the school. Their philanthropy knows no limits and their generosity no bounds.

Thank You!



Bryce Kisner, sophomore from Ludell, Kansas, had the opportunity to meet with Donna during one of her many visits to the SJMS campus. Bryce was awarded the Donna Vanier Scholarship for the 2014-2015 school year!





Michael J. Barron



Xinyang Du



Gian L. Falossi



Duncan J. Farrell



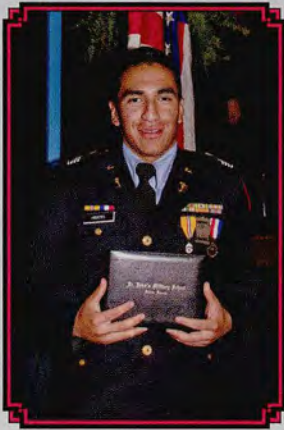
*Luis E. Garcia
Quintanar*



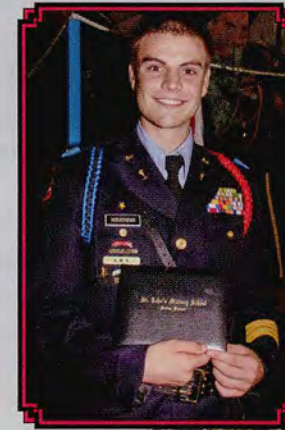
Jack M. Glasgow



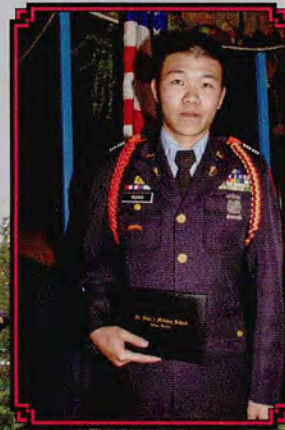
Calvin C. Guardiola



*Jonathon Daniel
Hertel*



*Geoffrey Wesley
Houchens*



QiongLin Huang



Seniors





Yixiu Li



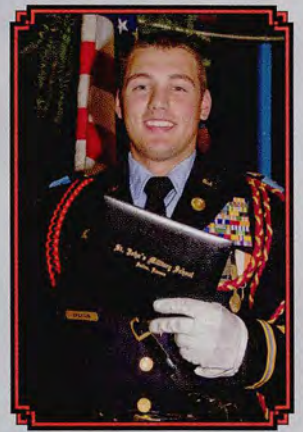
Logan M. Murtha



Lester L. Ostertag



Richard C. Reynolds



Chase H. Rose



Nicholas C. Sheldon



Brandon T. Swain



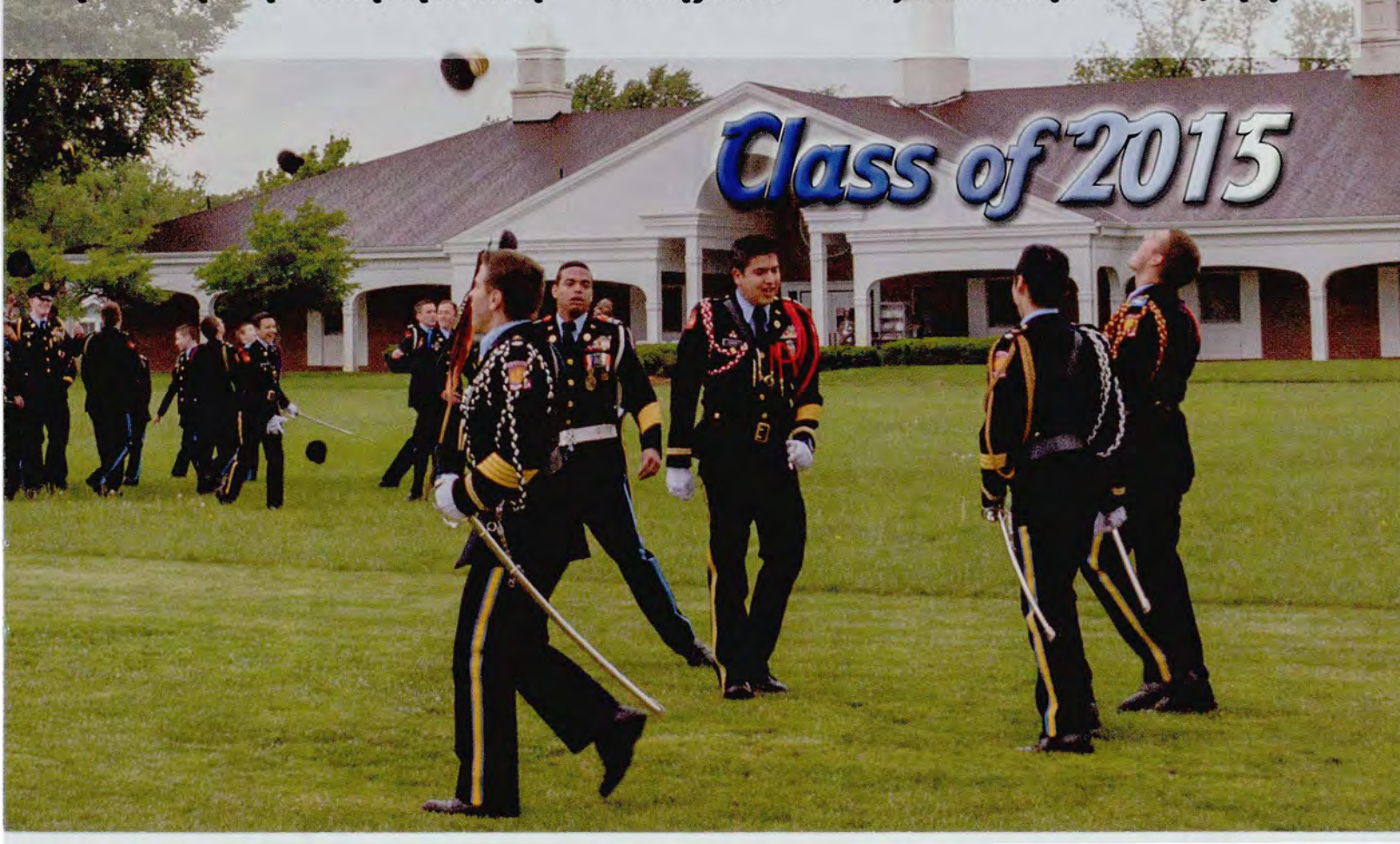
Caelon J. Tautz



Bryce A. Weidner



Yifan Xu



COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND

Oluwatimi Osunkoya and Jackson Brinn perform with the middle school drill team.

David Gross, Hays, Kansas, earned his Eagle Scout and was honored during the Boy Scout Court of Honor. From left: Scout intern, Terry Strecker; scout master, Brian Bell; David's father, Sam Gross; Eagle Scout, David Gross; David's mother, Debra Gross; and Micah Stahl, assistant scout master.



Daniel Wei was awarded the Tyler Sullivan Memorial Scholarship for the 2015-2016 school year. From left: Tyler's father, Shane Sullivan; HuiRu Ding, Daniel's mother; Daniel; and Zongying Wei, Daniel's father.



Alexander Weber displays deft rifle handling during the drill presentation.

Graduates Richard Reynolds, and Chase Rose pay their respect to the Freedom Tree.



Adeola Mike-Arabor, mother of Cadet Osahon Mike-Irabor, prepares to raise a flag Friday morning.



BN CSM Xinyang Du celebrates having his family on campus for commencement activities. From left: His aunt Lihua Cox; Xinyang; his mother, Chunwei Zhang; his father, Jun Du; and his uncle Bradley Cox.



"Old Boys" Tim Piowaty, class of 1991, and Jeremy Baerns, class of 1995, pass the handle during the handle ceremony.



The classes of the 50s return to campus!

The 127th Commencement weekend brought back many special memories for a group of "Old Boys." Graduates of the classes of the 1950s returned at the urging of distinguished alumni D. Dale Browning and COL Al Ransom. Friendships were rekindled, endearing stories told, and the brotherhood formed some 60 years ago remained solidly in tact.

The landscape of the school has been transformed since this group was last on campus. Their beloved Vail Hall was gone, destroyed by a fire in 1978. The "bull ring" once covered with soft dirt that showed the deep grooves of Cadets marching tours is now covered with bricks. Now only a memory, the revered faculty from their era were remembered as beacons from their past. Many paid tribute at the Guernsey/Loy monument to the men who had inspired and guided them when they were young Cadets.

Fifteen members of the classes of the 1950s made their pilgrimage to St. John's during commencement weekend. Several traditions still in place offered the men the chance to feel like they belonged. When "F" Troop formed early Friday morning, the numbers swelled beyond recent years.

Attending from the 50s were: Richard Nelson, 1950; Bob Balzerick, 1952; Ed Bigler, 1952; Gary Hanna, 1952; Rev. Bill Salmon, 1953; Elwood Brockman, 1954; Roger Bigler, 1955; D. Dale Browning, 1955; Carl Rylander, 1955; Herb Soukup, 1955; Al Ransom, 1956; Bucky Schuler, 1956; Bill Beech, 1957; Bob Pave, 1957; and Mike Ekiss, 1959.

With the rekindling of friendships and memories, each "Old Boy" attending could reflect on his accomplishments and the brotherhood he experienced during his time at SJMS.

D. Dale Browning and COL Al Ransom spearheaded the weekend events with the help of Alumni Director Terry Plumberg. Browning hosted a special alumni dinner Thursday evening at Martinelli's Little Italy, bringing together alumni, benefactors, faculty, and staff for an evening of laughter and reminiscing.

A special blessing of the class of the 1950s held in Armstrong Chapel provided a time for remembering a cherished past and reaffirming a commitment to the future of the school.

The Handle Ceremony held annually during the graduation portion of the weekend brought together Cadets spanning 60 years. As tradition holds, each Cadet graduating from St. John's touches the handle as it is passed around the circle of "Old

(cont. top next page)

1. Bob Pave and Bill Beech prepare to raise a flag.

2. Roger Bigler and Ed Bigler pass the handle.

3. "Old Boys" stand for a photo following the blessing of their class.

Front row: Bucky Schuler, class of 1956; Bob Pave, class of 1957; Bill Beech, class of 1957.

Back row: Mike Ekiss, class of 1956; Al Ransom, class of 1956; D. Dale Browning, class of 1955; John Torgan, class of 1961.

4. Al Ransom, D. Dale Browning, Tom Wilson (class of 1962), Bob Pave, and Bill Beech visit the St. John's history room. Bill Beech is sporting an old SJMS cowboy hat!



Boys." The handle was salvaged from the ruins of Vail Hall by Jack Vanier. This year many of the men in the circle of "Old Boys" had actually resided in Vail Hall. Ed Bigler, class of 1952, on his first trip back to St. John's, became overwhelmed as he felt the familiar touch of the brass handle he last touched as a young Cadet. The historic Brookville Hotel in Abilene, Kansas, was the site of the final event of the weekend. D. Dale Browning commemorated the 60th anniversary of the graduation of the class of 1955 by presenting each attendee with a cut glass vase inscribed with the St. John's crest. One vase will be displayed in the St. John's history room. Jack and Donna Vanier were made honorary members of the class of 1955 and presented with a plaque.

In typical "Old Boy" form, the alumni fashioned their own celebration sparing the school the expense. The alumni quietly participated in every event, watching, listening, and absorbing the sounds and sights of their past. Their presence was felt by many and the photos will tell the story, but the significance of having so many "Old Boys" return to campus is yet to be fully appreciated. The faculty and staff are thankful for the "Old Boys" who returned and hope that each commencement weekend will offer the chance to connect with the past in order to secure the future.



Battalion Commander Gian Falossi, class of 2015 passes the handle to D. Dale Browning, class of 1955.

St. John's Forever!

Honorary "Old Boys"



"I have experienced care and support from my St. John's mom, Mrs. Kraus. Over her years at St. John's she has been an outstanding teacher, while also showing kindness to all the cadets she has met. She is dedicated, hardworking, and one of the nicest people you will ever meet."

Brandon Swain, class of 2015

Mr. Wiedeman accepted a position at SJMS just out of college. We observed as he developed the SJMS art program, and we have admired his artistic talents. We have witnessed Mr. Wiedeman's dedication to SJMS through his photography. But most of all, we have witnessed Mr. Wiedeman's unwavering dedication to Cadets through his high standards, high expectations, and many words of encouragement. I cannot think of a better role model for our Cadets."

Ginger Wooten, Academic Dean



Being named an honorary "Old Boy" is a tradition started by the St. John's Old Boy Association (OBA). Several years ago the members of the OBA were searching for a way to recognize the outstanding work of SJMS Alumni Director Terry Plumberg. The idea of making her an honorary "Old Boy" became a reality when during commencement weekend 2008 Terry was called to the podium to accept the award. Surprised and grateful for the honor, Terry has graciously accepted the task of coordinating the continued effort to help recognize worthy faculty and staff members to receive this honor.

The 2015 recipients were Pam Kraus and Scott Wiedeman. Both members of the SJMS faculty, Kraus and Wiedeman share a passion for teaching and a dedication to the Cadets that has seldom been matched.

Scott Wiedeman, art teacher, photographer, and scuba instructor has in 19 years developed an art curriculum that stimulates the minds of the Cadets into accomplishing amazing artistic feats. He consistently finds the inner artist in the Cadets and has had several students' work honored at the state level. His work with the scuba club has allowed numerous Cadets to earn their master diving certificates as well as develop a lifelong interest in the sport. His photographic skills have produced award-winning photos capable of very eloquently telling the St. John's story. His photos make easy work for the yearbook editor and provide parents with a bridge to

the lives of their Cadets through the SJMS gallery. Wiedeman has taken a position in the Hutchinson, Kansas, school system for the 2015-2016 school year and his presence will be sorely missed. Thanks for your tremendous contributions to St. John's...we'll miss you, Scott!

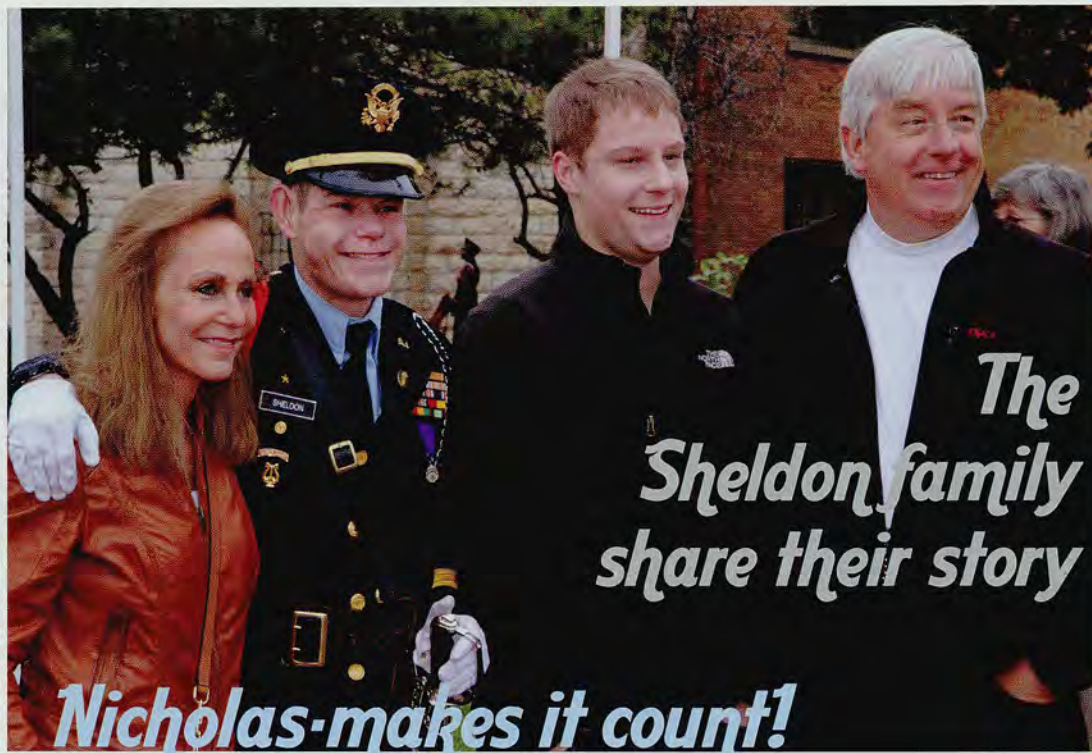
Pam Kraus, part-time science teacher, has re-written the meaning of the word dedicated. Her tireless efforts to help Cadets grasp the intricacies of the periodic table are legendary.

Chemistry, once disdained by most high school Cadets, is now a class filled with discovery and understanding. Late night study sessions prior to tests have become standard procedure. After school, before school, and on weekends, Cadets can take advantage of extra help. Kraus is also a willing partner to middle school teacher Anna Robles in sponsoring the robotics program and spends countless volunteer hours preparing for competition. Kraus willingly extends her day to ensure the academic success of her students and never hesitates to become a mentor to Cadets and a treasured confidant to parents.

St. John's is fortunate to have staff members who go above and beyond and lucky to have an Old Boy Association willing and eager to recognize those staff members for their great work!

Congratulations, Scott and Pam!

"We feel so blessed to have found St. John's, and we believe that sending Nicholas here was one of the best decisions we have made as parents. More important than his academic success, we are so proud that Nick has become a well-rounded and confident young man. He has truly matured, learned to show respect, and he is beginning to take genuine responsibility for his life."



• What prompted you to enroll Nicholas at St. John's?

"Nicholas had a lot of medical challenges early in life that caused him to be developmentally delayed when he began school. Also, Nick had been diagnosed with ADHD. While he had the capability to learn as much as everyone else, Nick quickly became complacent and didn't attempt anything requiring significant effort. This same attitude transcended to his home environment. When asked to do chores or participate in activities around the house, Nick became obstinate and angry when expectations were placed upon him.

As Nick evolved into his teenage years, the attitude, anger, and lying became habitual and couldn't be controlled. At school Nick appeared to his teachers as a well-behaved, docile, and timid young man. We initially augmented Nick's schooling with sessions at a nightly learning center. As he became older, we utilized tutors. As parents, we spent countless nights up until midnight, teaching Nick the material that he should have learned in school. We learned through this process that Nick had been lying to his teachers regarding completion of homework and studying for tests. In order to generate sympathy, he would make up stories indicating he had gone to the hospital the night before, or encountered some other medical necessity. Due to his early childhood medical issues, Nicholas' physical appearance looked a little different than some of the other boys, so it was easy to believe his 'made-up' excuses.

We determined that Nick needed a more structured learning environment than his prior school was able to provide. Thankfully, Nick was not involved with the negative influences that many teenagers face (smoking, drugs, alcohol, or the law). Instead, Nick's challenges were internal, and he needed to move beyond his past medical situation to gain confidence that he could accomplish whatever he strived to achieve. While we recognized the importance of academics, we felt strongly that integrity, honesty, and responsibility were required to truly succeed at anything in life. In general, we needed to provide Nicholas with an environment that would drive him to maturity, help him gain self-confidence, and compel him to assume responsibility for all of his actions."

• How did you learn about St. John's?

"We learned of St. John's through advertisements on the radio and through our searches for quality military schools on the Internet. We also learned of St. John's from friends and acquaintances who were familiar with other Cadets who had graduated from the school."

• What surprised you about St. John's?

"The immense level of care and attention provided by the entire St. John's staff has most pleasantly surprised us. St. John's truly is a family. They are the salt of the earth. Everyone, including the administration,

the faculty, the military staff, and all of the support personnel, genuinely care about each and every Cadet. This attention and care continues 24 hours a day. We thought that we were enrolling Nicholas in an excellent school – but now we know that he flourished in an institution completely dedicated to supporting and developing fine young men!"

• What has pleased you most about the progress Nicholas has made while a Cadet at St. John's?

"While attending St. John's, Nicholas has gained a great deal of personal confidence and embraced progressively larger responsibilities within the corps. Through guidance from the entire St. John's family, Nicholas has developed a much better sense of 'right vs. wrong' and has chosen the right path. He has been rewarded with progressively higher rank, and as a result, has gained self-confidence and maturity. Because Nick understands the need to take responsibility for his academics, his grades now reflect his dedicated effort. Nick has been accepted into two colleges; one of them even provided a significant scholarship!"

• How have you handled being separated from Nicholas for months at a time?

"Nick has a fraternal twin brother at home. We were initially concerned there may be some emotions displayed from Nick because we were sending him away

to school. From an emotional standpoint, we knew Nick was somewhat immature and would probably display his emotions more than some of the other boys. It was initially very difficult for us to be separated from Nicholas. After delivering Nick to St. John's, our drive back home to Colorado was extremely tough. Nick would send us distressed letters, making his situation seem dire, and pleading with us to let him come home. Many of Nick's reactions, stories, and dramas from school were attempts to persuade us to reconsider our decision and bring him home. Since we had endured many years with Nick's progressively negative attitude and overall manipulation, we stood strong. Eventually, Nicholas settled into the corps, recognizing that we were not going to come 'rescue' him based upon whatever he offered up as his 'story du jour.'

In a very short time, we grew to appreciate St. John's as our extended family. The administration, faculty, and military staff kept us very up to date on Nicholas, sometimes on a daily basis. We soon learned that Nicholas was in great company, and he recognized that we were only a phone call away when needed."

• What lessons has Nicholas learned at St. John's that will serve him well after he graduates?

"Nicholas has learned the importance of respecting people – his teachers, his military leaders, the St. John's staff, and his fellow Cadets. He has learned that hard work is the only key to true success, and whining/complaining gets him nowhere. Most importantly, he's learned that success is never given – it must be earned. St. John's does an exceptional job of teaching young men the importance of working hard and working together to achieve results. These are lessons that will benefit Nicholas for the rest of his life."

• How has the SJMS staff been helpful? Please list names and specific examples!

"There are not enough words to describe how the SJMS staff has been helpful to both Nicholas and us. When Nicholas was new to St. John's, the faculty, administration, and military staff immediately engaged him and welcomed him into the corps. At the same time, the faculty, administration, and military staff cheerfully answered all of our questions and provided us with constant reassurance regarding our decision to enroll Nicholas at St. John's.

Wendy Stein: Although Nicholas had no experience or aptitude for music, Wendy Stein happily enlisted Nicholas to play the trumpet in the SJMS Cadet band. She really provided positive coaching and helped him gain self-esteem. Wendy gets an 'A+' for going 'above

and beyond' with this!

Captain Reid and Captain Young: During his first two years at St. John's, Nicholas received tremendous direction, advice, and counseling from Captains Reid and Young. These gentlemen taught Nicholas the value and importance of discipline and doing 'the right thing.' They gave him the foundation to become a true leader and taught Nicholas that respect and self-confidence must be earned.

Lori Faerber: Nicholas' complicated medication regimen and schedule would be a challenge to any school nurse, but Lori is a true 'Florence Nightingale' when it comes to St. John's! In addition to having a strong medical background, Lori has a propensity to learn a tremendous amount about each of the Cadets. She is expert about questioning various situations, understanding the real problems, and recognizing 'stories' manufactured by Cadets to avoid doing particular tasks. Lori genuinely cares about all of the boys at St. John's.

Captain Bell and Sergeant Stahl: During this past year, Captain Bell and Sergeant Stahl have tremendously elevated Nicholas' level of self-confidence by holding him accountable and increasing his responsibilities. Under the solid guidance of these men, Nicholas was promoted to Executive Officer (XO) for Bravo Company, and he has truly learned what it takes to be a leader. Thanks to Captain Bell and Sergeant Stahl, Nicholas has matured greatly this year!

Mrs. Plumberg: Terry Plumberg has been instrumental in assisting Nicholas in preparing to take his college entrance exams, applying to colleges, and researching scholarships and other potential options after high school. We know Nick received great letters of recommendation from Terry, and we feel she played a key role in his acceptance into college. Terry has also served as a trusted confidant to Nick, and she has helped him in coping with a multitude of difficult situations.

President England: Andy England is a tremendous leader for St. John's! He can truly relate to the students, and he has taken the time to personally coach Nick through some challenging situations. When Nick has felt defeated or gone through a tough time, President England has encouraged Nick to recognize how much he has accomplished during his time at St. John's. As parents, we view Andy as a tremendous role model and a wonderful communicator. He is skilled at providing parents with an understanding of what the boys

are going through and translating Cadet feelings and behaviors. President England is very intuitive, remains calm in difficult situations, and applies a healthy degree of prudence to all that happens at St. John's. Over the past three years, we have watched St. John's weather many a storm under President England's capable guidance and leadership."

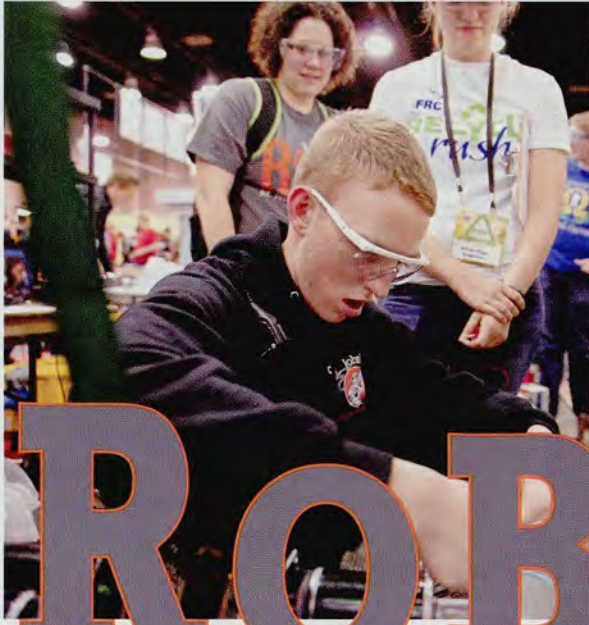
• What could you tell parents who are thinking about enrolling their son at St. John's?

"Although it is always a tough decision to send your son to military school, be assured that the St. John's family is going to take great care of him. We don't just respect St. John's as a fine military school; we view it as the very best learning institution we've ever encountered. Every single member of the St. John's staff is dedicated to caring for and molding boys into fine young men. The SJMS administrators, faculty, military staff, and everyone else are truly a family, and when you enroll your son at St. John's, he is welcomed in and forever treated as a member of the family."

• How do you plan to stay involved with St. John's after Nicholas graduates?

"We plan to continue our financial contributions through our employer, particularly as our company matches our contributions when we donate to a school such as St. John's. When asked, we also plan to continue to serve as great references for St. John's, and we will happily consult with prospective parents and families."





ROBOTICS

Another robotics season has come to an end. We left Salina Wednesday and headed to Oklahoma City. We had dinner and then went to play some laser tag before the madness began. While we did encounter some bad weather, bus driver Lance Werber navigated us safely to our destination. Thursday was a practice day. We had to put the pit together and then assemble the robot. Before getting on the playing field, we had to pass inspection. We started out flying through the whole first page. Then there were a few electrical issues that we had to fix in order to pass. Luckily, because of how this competition works, another team gave us two talons (motor controllers) that would allow us to pass inspection.

Friday was the first day of qualification matches. We had eight matches. We went 2-6. There were a few matches where we struggled with our forklift arm. The Cadets were able to get a replacement part from the Salina HorsePOWER team which allowed us to compete in the last match of the day and score a win by a score of 87-82. We went 0-2 on Saturday. The great thing

about this year's game is that all of the points scored helped to decide rankings, so it was not just a team's win-loss record. Although we only won two of the ten matches, we averaged 40 points a match.

During our last match, we had the first opportunity in four years to play on the same alliance as Salina HorsePOWER. It was amazing to watch these two teams work together to score points. We did not manage to win, but in this match we scored our highest points. Ultimately, we finished 43rd out of 61 teams. We earned 44 recycle points, 78 tote points, and 106 litter points.

I would like to take a moment to thank a few people:

- Mr. Werber for getting us where we needed to be;
- Mr. and Mrs. Pappas for joining us, getting our lunches each day, and being our cheering section. Mr. Pappas also took pictures and provided some walkie talkies;
- Mr. Deters for making sure we had tools, a cart, and a tent for competition and for his help

- throughout the season;
- Linda Payne and the kitchen crew for the lunches and snacks they put together for us;
- HorsePOWER 3172 for their support;
- Kevin Kraus for helping mentor this year and joining us at the competition;
- All the faculty and staff who have supported us.

Pam Kraus and I are very proud of what the robotics team was able to accomplish. The Cadets once again represented the school very well.
Anna Robles



Michael Barron Class of 2015

Mission accomplished!

"Right after I passed 'New Boy,' I knew St. John's was the place for me."

Michael Barron's parents were searching the Internet to find a school when they discovered the St. John's Military School website. They explain, "Reading all the written comments and testimonials, we were convinced this was the school for Michael." Prior to coming to St. John's, Michael had a total lack of interest in school. He had severe ADHD, and by the 4th grade was started on meds. His mom states, "This provided Michael with the focus needed in the classroom, but when he entered middle school in the 7th grade, he was left behind because of his inability to function and organize on his own in the public school system. He refused to do homework, even though he knew the answers, and would spend all free time (including lunch) hiding out in the library, playing games on the computers. By the time he started the 8th grade, Michael had started down his path of choice, which was school dropout." When the family toured the St. John's campus in late 2010, the decision was made to place Michael at St. John's. Michael arrived at St. John's second semester of his 8th grade year.

Michael Barron graduated with the St. John's Military School class of 2015. When he received his diploma, his mom "was crying with happiness and bursting with pride" and his dad was "relieved and proud." The years leading up to this moment were filled with growth on Michael's part and diligence on the part of his parents. His journey was not without bumps in the road. His mom tells the story about his junior year: "We believe peer pressure, by means of an all boys school run by boys, provided the impact for Michael to start maturing. Michael didn't start physically maturing until age 15, and then his body went on an outrageous growing binge that caused negative reactions to his ADHD treatment. After commencement 2014, with his doctor's approval, Michael was taken off all medication. His physical changes allowed him to take control of himself without the aid of medications. He was eager to start his senior year. His father and I have been on

him, since his junior year, about time running out because he can never go in reverse, but he can always move forward. His dad impressed upon him about doing and being all he can this last year with no regrets. Leadership camp of Michael's junior year, he insisted he wanted to join soccer. When we received the 1st issue of the Guidon for the year, we called the school because Michael wasn't in the soccer team picture. We were told that Michael had quit the team before the end of leadership camp. We had a talk with him about making it right... Michael talked to the soccer coach who told him he needed to clear the issue with Coach Roy Lawrence before rejoining the team. Coach Roy told him he couldn't come back; he let the team down, maybe next year. Michael had to live with the consequences of his decision. During leadership camp of his senior year, Michael decided he wanted to letter in soccer, so he made inquiries and was assigned one of the two manager openings for the soccer team. He put his all into being manager for the team and at season's end, Michael received his letter."

The Barrons offer the following advice to any parent looking for a school to help their son: "St. John's is the place your son will receive a top-notch education with opportunities not available in the public school system. Your son will learn to be a responsible, caring, and mentoring young adult by his own discovery. In order for this to happen, your son would benefit most from an early enrollment in middle school."

During Michael's years at St. John's, he became more and more involved and took advantage of the family atmosphere to grow and mature. As his St. John's mom, Mrs. Stein delighted in the way Michael grew and became more involved in Cadet life. She says, "Michael joined the robotics team and became an integral part of one of St. John's most challenging activities." During Michael's 8th grade year, Terry Plumberg, Director of Alumni, needed a

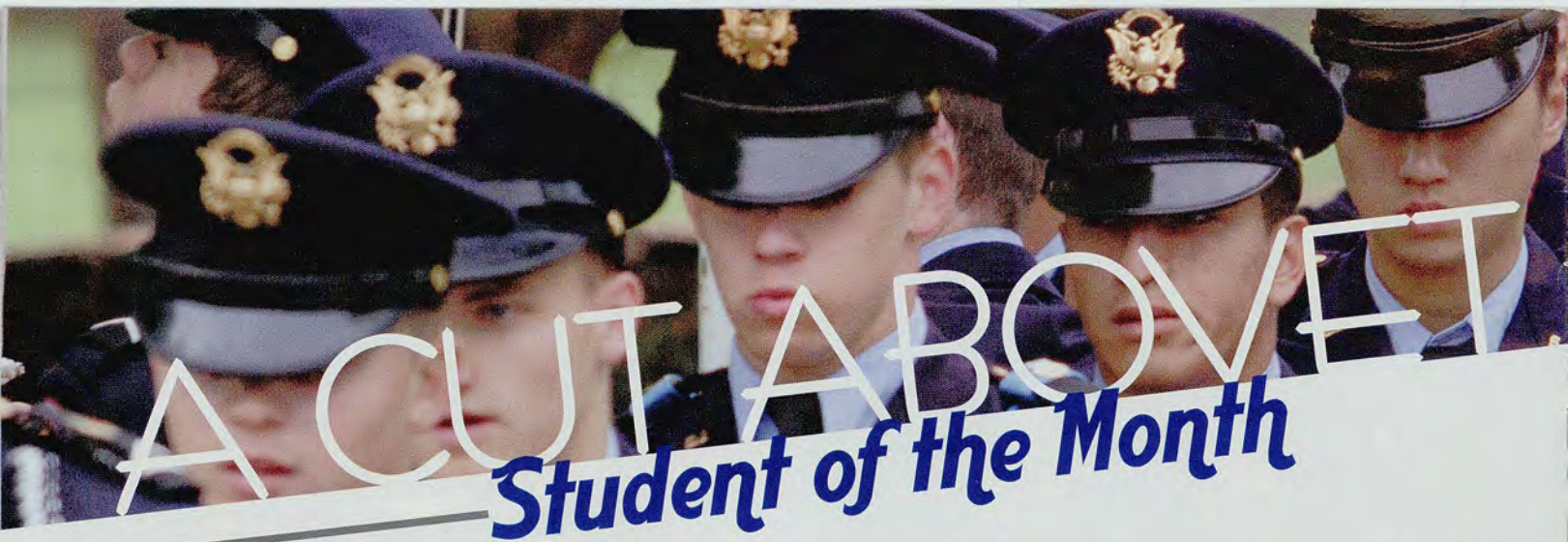


From top: Carmen, Michael's mom; Michael; and Henry, Michael's dad. "Old Boy" Ed Lehman and Michael. Miles Pappas and Michael at the robotics competition in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Cadet to escort "Old Boy" Ed Lehman. Ed and Michael became fast friends as Michael helped Ed navigate campus during commencement weekend. Michael describes the best part of his friendship with Mr. Lehman, several years his senior, as a way to "connect with the past corps of the school."

The Barrons hoped that St. John's would "teach Michael to take charge of his life, give him the confidence to make the right choices, and then to graduate high school with a total feeling of accomplishment when that diploma is placed in his hands."

Mission accomplished!



"The SJMS Student of the Month program founded by Paula Wilton, SJMS teacher, identifies students who give their maximum effort, work well with others, and display a positive attitude, on a consistent basis, in the classroom. Academic Dean Ginger Wooten explains, "The SJMS faculty enjoys recognizing deserving Cadets!!"

Cadets earning this honor receive rec bucks to spend at the quartermaster and in the snack bar, are recognized on local radio stations, and their photos are posted in Vanier Academic Center during the month they are chosen for this honor.

Congratulations to all the Student of the Month recipients!

September



Robert Conde-Reed
Andover, KS
Grandson of Lynn Reed
Three year Cadet



Jake Whitting
Glen Head, NY
Son of David and Janine Whitting
Six year Cadet

October



Dawson Odegard
Woodbury, MN
Son of Melissa Odegard
First year Cadet

November



Bryan Udofia
Richmond, TX
Son of LB and Ann Udofia
Three year Cadet



Miles Pappas
Lakewood, CO
Son of Mike and Teresa Pappas
First year Cadet

January



Alexander Neroni
Delhi, NY
Son of Frederick and Tatiana Neroni
Four year Cadet



Nicholas Sheldon Parker, CO
Son of William and Mary Sheldon
Three year Cadet

February



Jackson Forbes
Las Vegas, NV
Son of Gary and Barbara Forbes
First year Cadet



Daniel Wei
Superior, CO
Son of Hui Ru Ding and Zongying Wei
First year Cadet

April



Caden Lohrenz
Castlerock, CO
Son of Jeff and Sarah Collins
First year Cadet



Roman Smyslov
Dallas, TX
Son of David and Olena Clarkson
First year Cadet



Academic Honors

Blue Beret Cadets are also members of the Dean's Honor Roll!

Blue Beret

High School



Jonathon Hertel

Yixiu Li

Daniel Wei

Middle School



Jackson Brinn

Osahon Mike-Irabor

Mark Pearsall

High School

Dean's Honor Roll



Yifan Xu

Xinyang Du

Brandon Swain

Edmund Sykes

HaoRan Zhang

Jack Glasgow

Roman Smyslov

Middle School



Brandon Burrage

Jackson Forbes

Caden Lohrenz



Garrett Burr

Luis Garcia Quintanar



High School

Honor Roll



Miles Pappas

Chase Rose

Duncan Farrell

Geoffrey Houchens

Carver Patterson

James Ushman

QiongLin Huang

KeYu Li

Alexander Weber

Blase Whitting

Demear Thorne



JiaJi Liu

LaTrey Spivey-Colbert

Zachary Mazer

Hongyu Wu

Christopher Reilly-Reed

Jake Whitting

Middle School



Isaiah Saya

Cameron Ojennes

ChenHao Yu

Bryan Udofia

Oluwatimi Osunkoya

Alexander Neroni

Michael Winters

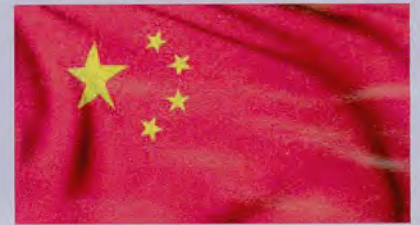
Jacob Younger

Dawson Odegard

Nicholas Rosenthal

JiaJi Liu

“I learned from the other Cadets and after passing ‘New Boy,’ everything was OK!”



JiaJi Liu came to St. John's from Mainland China in the fall of 2013. His parents were looking for a school where JiaJi could, in their words, “strengthen his language skills, help him overcome difficulties, study hard, and become an all-around student.” His father always dreamed of being a soldier but there was no opportunity. His father explains, “I hoped that my son would learn four important points at a military school: first, he would develop a strong will by daring to struggle; second, he would learn the benefits of team spirit and teamwork; third, he would develop a strong physique and learn to serve humanity; and finally, he would earn a good cultural education.” After two years at St. John's, the Liu family is very pleased with JiaJi's progress. They describe St. John's as being “a very special school in a beautiful environment, that pays great attention to cultivating character, promoting team spirit, and providing an academic environment that helps the Cadets reach their full potential.”

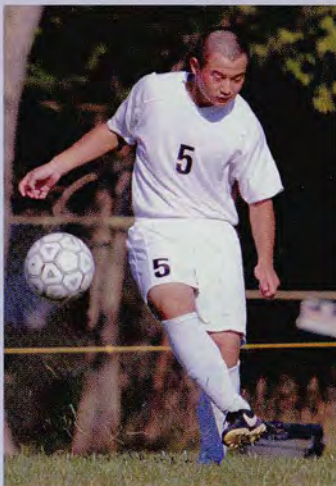
His parents were very worried about sending their 16-year-old only child so far away from home. His father states, “JiaJi was very determined and very confident, so we purchased a ticket and a suitcase, and he went to the United States!”

JiaJi has made the most of the opportunity to attend St. John's. When JiaJi learned he was traveling to study at St. John's, his goal was “to challenge himself, be more self-confident, and become a real man.” Upon his arrival at St. John's, he found the “New Boy” training program to be very difficult. He explained, “I felt terrible during ‘New Boy’ training. The physical training was OK, but the yelling was not.” After passing his “New Boy” test and becoming an “Old Boy,” JiaJi said he grew to like St. John's.

His time at St. John's has not been wasted. While he found the academics to be very challenging, he has met that challenge head on. He earned a 3.5 GPA and is on the Honor Roll.

During the 2014-2015 school year, JiaJi was a platoon leader in Alpha Company and rose to the rank of second lieutenant. He was a member of the award-winning St. John's rifle team and played soccer for St. John's. His favorite class so far has been wood shop, where he built a dresser.

Following his graduation in 2016, JiaJi plans to attend New York University located in Greenwich Village, New York City, New York, majoring in math and chemistry, and one day hopes to create his own company.







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OR CURRENT RESIDENT

August - 2015

- August 5 Military In Service Begins
- August 10 New Staff/Faculty Orientation
- August 11 Faculty/Military Staff Communication Workshop
- August 12 Battalion Staff & New Boy Training Cadre Return
- August 14 Muleskinner Appreciation Dinner
- August 15 Leadership Camp/Fall Sports Camp
"Old Boy" Registration
- August 16 Leadership Camp/Fall Sports Camp
"New Boy" Registration
- August 17 Begin Leadership Camp/Sports Camp
- August 24-28 Faculty In-service
- August 30 "Old Boy" Registration
- August 31 Forming and Blessing of the 128th Corps of Cadets

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 **Leadership Camp**

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