

# Marian Catholic ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



APRIL 2022

## JOSEPH J. VELITSKY, ESQ., CLASS OF '62 IS HONORARY CHAIRMAN OF ANNUAL FUND

A prominent Summit Hill attorney, Joseph J. Velitsky, Esq., is serving as the honorary Chairman of the 2021-2022 Marian Fund, the major fundraising arm of Marian Catholic High School.

The drive – launched earlier this year in a mailing to alumni, family and friends of the school – has a goal of \$500,000.

Velitsky, a 1962 graduate of MCHS who has his law office in Summit Hill for the past 52 years, said, "I am honored to be able to advocate for our Alma Mater, because it is a special place that has great significance to me."

"I believe in Catholic education and I believe in Marian Catholic. I received a great education there and it helped me in my career."

Velitsky said the Marian Fund is "an integral part of the school that helps make a Catholic education available to families that desire an exceptional education that is rooted in faith, family and tradition for their sons and daughters."

His commitment to Marian Catholic, he said, comes from his late mother, Anna (Rhodunda) Velitsky, saying, "She believed in Catholic education," adding, "Both myself and my brother, Paul, had our start in grade school at St. Joseph's Parochial School, Summit Hill, and that's where we learned our appreciation for

the people who were devoted to Catholic education, like the Sisters of Mercy, Sr. Mary Florence and Msgr. (J. Francis) Haley."

When he moved on to Marian Catholic, he said, it was a "rewarding experience that influenced my life."

The honorary chairman said generations of Marian Catholic High School graduates "have benefitted from the wonderful education they received, and the success in their lives, families and professions are a testament to our past and upbringing."

He stressed the importance of the Marian Fund, saying escalating costs present challenges to supporters of Catholic education. Generous donations, he added, "will have a tremendous impact on the future of Catholic education, in addition to helping Marian Catholic to award much-needed financial aid that assists families in pursuit of a Catholic education for their children."

Velitsky said, "It is important to carry on tradition of Catholic education," urging alumni and friends to "make a contribution that makes a difference in the life of every student at Marian Catholic High School."

Contributions are 100 percent tax deductible.



*"It is important to carry on the tradition of Catholic education and to make a contribution that makes a difference in the life of every student at Marian Catholic High School."*

Other programs in which supporters of Catholic education can help MCHS include the matching gifts, planned giving, corporate matching and tax credit programs.

For more information on those programs, contact Kristine Evina, Director of Advancement, [kevina@mariancatholicchs.org](mailto:kevina@mariancatholicchs.org), or call 570-467-3335, extension 115.

## A MARIAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION PAVED WAY FOR MAGGIE RIGGINS' JOURNEY

When Maggie Riggins graduated from Marian Catholic High School in 1995, she was certain her Marian Catholic education prepared her for a rewarding career, one that would allow her to assist others on their journey to encounter Jesus Christ.

Her undergraduate and graduate studies having been completed, Maggie is pursuing her goals, having recently been named Executive Director of Evangelization and Formation for the Diocese of Allentown.

A native of Morea, Maggie pursued a Bachelor of Science degree in Theology and Philosophy from DeSales University, Center Valley, after which time she earned a Master's degree in Theology from Villanova University.

"My Marian Catholic education inspired me to pursue a degree in Theology, and my participation in athletics led to my being recruited to DeSales University," Maggie noted.

At Marian Catholic, Maggie was "all in" academically and was involved in a variety of school activities, including playing on the Fillies' basketball team, being involved in the Student Government and having been inducted into the National Honor Society.

But that's not all. She worked in the school store; was crowned Homecoming Queen; served as a student manager for the baseball team; and was a valuable member of Marian's Scholastic Scrimmage and Schola/Choir teams.

Maggie moved on to DeSales, graduating in 1999, and then earned her master's degree at VU. Upon graduation there, she returned to DeSales where she worked in campus ministry from 2001-2021.

In that role, she served on the Executive Board of CCMA (Catholic Campus Ministry Association), and a consulting committee for the USCCB's Office of High Education.

In the fall of 2020, Maggie began working for the Diocese of Allentown as the Director of the Office of Young Adult and Campus Evangelization – overseeing Catholic Campus Ministry at Kutztown University and Lafayette College, as well as organizing local, regional and diocesan events for young adults.

Less than two years later, she was promoted to her new job where, she said, "I will be overseeing many different ministries and apostolates in the diocese.

"Ultimately, my hope is to assist schools, parishes and ministries provide meaningful and appropriate opportunities for evangelization and formation, enabling people to encounter Jesus Christ in a personal, relational way."

Maggie will lead the effort to "bring the Good News of Jesus to people in the five counties of the Diocese, working with parishes, Catholic ministries, and individuals," according to the AD Times.

She also will work closely with the Office of Education, and with Directors of



*"I believe that people are yearning for interaction with the Church that is specific, personal, and Christ-centered."*

Religious Education, on the faith formation of Catholic school students, a key part of a well-rounded Catholic education.

"Building meaningful relationships, accompanying Catholics to the truth and sharing that message with great joy is at the heart of evangelization and formation" said Bishop Alfred Schlert, "In Maggie, we see a heart well prepared to serve in this key role of bringing people to the person of Christ."

"I believe that people are yearning for interaction with the Church that is specific, personal, and Christ-centered," Riggins said. "Our goal in the Evangelization and Formation office will be to answer that call to community."

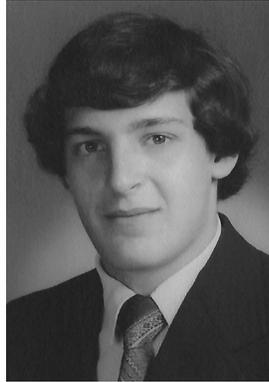
### KEEP US INFORMED

**Provide us your updated information.** The success of any organization is dependent upon membership and communications. As we are continually updating our contact information, we'd like to hear from you. An "Alumni – update your information" prompt is readily available on the alumni page of the school's website.

## FOUR FORMER COLT GRIDDEES, CAGE COACH, TO BE INDUCTED INTO CARBON HALL OF FAME



**Joseph Gillespie**



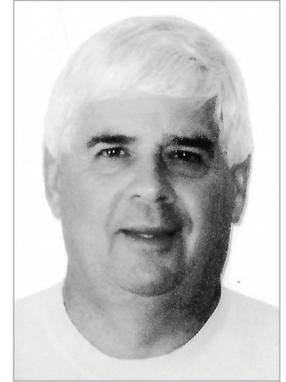
**Robert Bydlon**



**Jim McHugh**



**Dr. Richard G. Miller**



**David McAndrew**

Four former Colt football players and an ex-Marian Catholic cage coach are among those who will be inducted into the Carbon County Sports Hall of Fame this year.

They include Joseph Gillespie, Class of 1991; Rich Miller, Class of 1992; Jim McHugh, Class of 1982; Bob Bydlon, Class of 1974; and David McAndrew Sr., Class of 1972.

We are proud to congratulate our Marian Catholic Hall of Fame inductees:

### **JOSEPH GILLESPIE**

Gillespie helped Marian Catholic leave Middletown in December 1990 with the PIAA Class A State Championship trophy – following a stunning 21-13 triumph over the highly-touted Farrell Steelers – putting the final touches on a prolific career on the gridiron that didn't start until he first put on a football uniform as a freshman.

His heroics on the football field earned him First Team All State laurels, and a place on the Pennsylvania roster in the 1991 Big 33 game, something few local athletes attain, then capping it off with a full scholarship to attend the University of Maryland.

In a three-year varsity career for Coach Stan Dakosty's Colts, Gillespie and his teammates compiled a 29-9 record,

including the 13-1 campaign in his senior, state championship year (1990). In addition to winning the PIAA state crown, he and his teammates were the 1988 District 11 runner-up and 1989 District 11 champions.

During his varsity career with the Colts, Gillespie rushed the ball 384 times for 2,323 yards, averaging 6 yards per carry, and tallied 134 points. He rushed for 1,057 yards during the 1990 season, when he scored 12 TDs and a two-point conversion.

His 2,323 yards rushing ranked him in fourth place on Marian's heralded all-time rushing yards list (behind Mike Tracy and Bob and Jim Agosti). Since that time, K.J. Snerr and Paul Martin have entered the top five, putting Gillespie sixth among all-time Colt runningbacks in yards rushing.

### **ROBERT BYDLON**

Bydlon, a Summit Hill native and 1974 graduate of Marian Catholic High School, was a standout lineman for the Colts who went on to play for four years at East Stroudsburg State College.

At Marian, he earned 10 varsity letters and served as captain in football and baseball in his junior and senior years. He was also recognized as an All County-All Area gridder in his junior and

senior years by the Reading Eagle and Times News & Record newspapers.

After high school, Bob studied biology laboratory medicine at East Stroudsburg State College (1974-78), where he played for the Warriors' football team, starting all four years as an offensive left guard during a special ESSC era of three PSAC football championship seasons.

### **JIM MCHUGH**

McHugh is a 1982 graduate of Marian Catholic High School, where he was a three-year letter winner for the Colts' football teams from 1979-81, during which time the forces of Coach Stan Dakosty finished with a record of 32-5.

He started tackle on offense and as an interior lineman on defense, when the Colts went 12-1 and won the 1980 Eastern Football Conference Class B championship. They outscored their 13 opponents by a margin of 403-157.

When he was a senior, Jim played the tackle positions on both offense and defense for the Colts, who outscored opponents 359-165 in a season in which for the first time ever, Marian had a 1,000-yard rusher and 1,000-yard passer, finishing the season with an 11-2 record and as the conference runner-up as they dropped a 10-8 contest to Scranton Prep.

*(continued on page 4)*

**CARBON HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES (CONTINUED)**

**DR. RICHARD G. MILLER**

Dr. Richard G. Miller is a 1992 graduate of Marian Catholic High School, where he was an outstanding student and a four-year athlete.

In his senior year, he was also Marian's Scholar-Athlete and played in the Schuylkill County North-South All Star (Dream) Game.

His moment in time occurred in the 1990 state championship game against Farrell when he caught a touchdown pass for Marian's first score late in the first half, which eventually resulted in a 7-7 tie game at halftime and sparked Marian's

comeback win against the powerful Steelers team. He actually wrestled the ball away from a Farrell defender after what appeared to be an interception.

After graduating from Marian, he continued his football career at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was an outstanding tailback in lightweight football and was named all-league first team as a runningback in the Eastern Lightweight Football League as a junior and senior.

**DAVID McANDREW**

Coach McAndrew is a 1972 graduate of Marian Catholic High School who began

his coaching tenure at Marian in 1990.

During six years as head coach, Dave had a .795 winning percentage (136-35), which is tops among any Marian basketball coaches in the history of the school. He guided the Colts to four Schuylkill League divisional championships, two league title games and two District 11 championship titles (1995 and 1996), including the first in the school's history.

Coach McAndrew's Marian teams reached the PIAA state eastern semi-finalist games in 1994 and 1998.

**MARIAN NAMES SCHOLAR-ATHLETE**

The Schuylkill County Chapter No. 25 of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame held its 2021-2022 Football Scholar Athlete banquet on March 20 in Minersville.

Representing Marian was our Scholar Athlete Jacob Fenstermaker.

Jake played multiple positions for the Colts, including free safety, linebacker, cornerback, wide receiver, running back, and kick returner. He was a two-year starter.

A multi-sport athlete, Fenstermaker is a four-year member and a captain of the track and field team. He was a state medalist in the 4x100M relay and was Schuylkill League runner up in the 100M. He also is a member of the basketball team.

Off the field, Fenstermaker has served as a volunteer at the Carbon County Fair. He is a church altar server, a member of the FBLA club, and participates in the Green Club.

Academically, he holds a 3.0 GPA, ranking him in the top 50% of his class of 59 students. His academic awards include the Honor Roll and the Bishops Annual Appeal Award.

Fenstermaker has received acceptances to DeSales, Moravian, Scranton and Kutztown. He has been offered awards including the Royal Resent Award Scholarship and Trustee Scholarship. His future plans include a major in business administration with a minor in data analytics. He also hopes to continue his athletic career in college.



Jacob is the son of Chris and Diane Fenstermaker.

*Pictured: Marian Scholar Athlete Jake Fenstermaker with Head Coach Stan Dakosty, left, and assistant coach Billy O'Gurek at Scholar Athlete dinner.*

**LET US HEAR FROM YOU**

We're interested in hearing from alumni and would like to share news about your families, careers, etc. with your classmates and friends. Whether you are planning a reunions or just want to locate a classmate, send us an email at [alumni@mariancatholic.org](mailto:alumni@mariancatholic.org) and we will be more than happy to help you reunite with the Marian Catholic family.

## IN MEMORIAM

Marian Catholic High School alumni and friends are asked to keep in their thoughts and prayers the families of the following:

**Mrs. Nancy C. McGorry-Sniscak**, 71, of Nesquehoning, passed away on March 25, 2022. She was the wife of Mark Sniscak and was a 1968 graduate of Marian Catholic High School.

**SAVE THE DATE:  
MARIAN DAY OF CARING 2022**  
**WEDNESDAY, MAY 11 &  
THURSDAY, MAY 12**

## HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS? YOU CAN DESIGNATE YOUR PA STATE TAXES TO MARIAN CATHOLIC!

*Have you heard the news? You can designate your PA state taxes to Marian Catholic!  
Now open for the 2022-2023 school year. The deadline is May 13, 2022.*

If you, your friends or your family members own a business in Pennsylvania – or are a Pennsylvania taxpayer – you can help build a brighter future for deserving students at Marian Catholic High School. This year, over 60% of our students received tuition assistance through the PA tax credit program. By participating in this amazing program, you can make a Marian Catholic education possible for our students next year and for years to come. PLUS... The Allentown Diocese has made the process simple, quick, and easy! Please contact Kristine Evina, MCHS Director of Advancement, at [kevina@mariancatholic.org](mailto:kevina@mariancatholic.org) or call 570-467-3335 ext 115 for more information.

Visit our website for more information: [www.mariancatholicchs.org/tax-credit](http://www.mariancatholicchs.org/tax-credit)

## BE A CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

Because classmates keep in touch with each other, and probably know better where their classmates are living, we are using a classmate representative approach to help us update our records. So, we need your help! The role of the Class Representative is to help connect their Marian classmates and other alumni by informing them about what is going on currently at the school and within the Alumni Association and engaging them through events and reunions. For more information on the association and how you can help, contact Bill O'Gurek, Class of '73 and association president at [alumni@mariancatholicchs.org](mailto:alumni@mariancatholicchs.org).

