In late October we celebrated the annual gala at the University of Miami. For this occasion, we made sure to find a larger location than in previous years in order to give access to a larger number of members of the Belen Jesuit community. It was well worth it. Over 800 people were in attendance and it was a night filled with food, music, and great fun. As it has always been the case, this night helped raise money for the financial assistance program of the school, extending to families the great opportunity to receive a Jesuit education.

But there was another reason why we wanted a larger crowd. This great event also served the purpose of publicly launching our For the Greater Glory Capital Campaign. After two years of a lot of hard work in the silent phase of a fundraising campaign to help implement the strategic plan for our school, it was finally time to let the whole Belen Jesuit community know that we were on the prowl.

The fact is that everyone is in love with all the initiatives for the future of our school. Everyone is in love with the idea of taking Belen to the next level while also remaining steadfast to our sacred past. Everyone loves the lights on the field, the Our Lady of Belen Chapel, and the Roberto C. Goizueta Innovation Center, but all that requires the help in both time and treasure of the whole Belen community.

This is the singular purpose of this very aggressive capital campaign. A comprehensive, all-inclusive push to raise the necessary funds to make the continuous Belen dream a reality. Most would say that we have surpassed the expectations our founding Jesuit fathers had almost 60 years ago and there is no stopping us now. We have only begun to scratch the surface of the great potential Belen Jesuit has. We owe it to our students and their families. We owe it to our Jesuit priests and brothers.

And we also owe it to you, our alumni. We have all witnessed first-hand what has been accomplished. Not a single one of us comes on to our campus and is not impressed with what we see. The alumni have been the backbone of these great initiatives. There is no question that we could not have come this far without the support of so many alumni who have remained faithful to their alma mater. Men who have sent their sons to Belen in order to continue the Jesuit tradition in their families. Men who have come back to school to teach, to speak to our students, to mentor, and to hire other alumni.

In January we gathered as the Belen community to celebrate the ordination of one of our own, Julio Minsal-Ruiz, S.J. ’05, who was ordained to the priesthood at Gesu Catholic Church. His vocation was born in the hallways of Belen Jesuit. His desire to serve Christ and his Church was fed in the classrooms of Belen Jesuit. It was the priests and faculty at Belen Jesuit that inspired him to answer the call and commit his life to this priestly service. This is one of the greatest ways to give back to his alma mater.

The extraordinary success we have experienced thus far in this capital campaign is due especially to the many alumni who have stepped up to the plate and said “yes” when we have called. On behalf of your alma mater... thank you. Now, it is time to keep moving forward. With your help, by committing to the annual fund, by getting involved, there is no doubt that we will once again rise to the challenge and continue to push forward and complete the task at hand.

Auspice Maria,

Father Guillermo M. García-Tuñón, S.J., Ed.D., ’87
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CLASS OF 2019 DELEGATES
Alejandro Salas, Christian Paz, Tyler Abella, Luciano Bettocchi, Nicholas Perez, Javier Marsal, Santiago Gonzalez Irigoyen, David Raez and Waldo Toyos were introduced as the class of 2019 delegates after the Alumni Mass and Pin Ceremony on May 21. Pictured above, from right to left with Alumni Association Executive Director Carlos Bravo ’86 and Alumni Association President Tony Castro ’86.

SUPPORTING THE BAHAMAS
From September 2-13 the Belen Jesuit community raised $17,550 for Hurricane Dorian relief efforts. Additionally, a relief drive was coordinated with SeaHunter Boats and the help of the Zumpano family. Vital items such as mosquito netting, mosquito repellent, canned food, and first aid supplies were collected.

EIGHTH GRADE FAMILY DAY
The 8th Grade Family Day was held on September 21 for the class of 2024. One of the most important parts of the day is its service component. All families made sandwiches for local area charities.

EXEMPLIFYING THE MAGIS
24 organizations participated in the Volunteer Service Fair on September 27. Students from 9-11 grade participated. “Our students are taught from the beginning what the Magis means,” said Community Service and Outreach Coordinator Teresita Gonzalez. “They understand that it not only represents doing more but to do it in such a way that God’s abundant love is evident in our actions.”

NINTH GRADE WOLVERINE WEEKEND
In an effort to continuously promote class unity a new tradition at Belen Jesuit called Wolverine Weekend took place on September 27-28. This overnight experience welcomed the class of 2023 into high school and promoted the fostering of lifelong friendships. The event was held at Camp Geneva in Fruitland Park, Florida and was coordinated by the Student Council.

SIXTH GRADE LOCK-IN
The class of 2026 took part in the annual sixth-grade tradition - Lock-In on October 19. This event is an exciting and memorable tradition for the youngest members of our school community.

HOMECOMING GAME
Members of the 2009 football team were recognized during halftime at the Homecoming game on October 11 in honor of their historic season and run to the State Title ten years ago.

TRUNK OR TREAT
Members of the Belen Jesuit class of 2020 led the 1st ever Trunk or Treat for students from the Miami Learning Experience. Students visited Belen to trick or treat out of the trunks of the senior’s cars, which were decorated to different themes.

TENTH GRADE MOTHER AND SON DAY
The sophomore class participated in the annual Mother and Son Day on November 23. Students and their mothers gathered on this day in the school gym to on a “date”. The event also included a Mass, brunch and a dancing class.

SENIOR RING MASS
Members of the class of 2020 received their Senior Ring during a special Mass on October 8. “I beg you, as one who also wears this great ring of honor, do not do the ring an injustice by wearing it simply as a symbol of your time spent at Belen,” said Father Willie during the homily. “Let the ring be a powerful testament of your commitment to Christ and the potential you have to be a force for good in the world.”

DADS’ MASS AND BREAKFAST
The first Dads’ Mass and Breakfast of the school year was hosted by the Agrupacion Católica Universitaria (ACU) and Belen Jesuit held in the ACU House on October 18.

REYES MAGIS THANKSGIVING
Alumni, parents, and students volunteered at Gesu Catholic Church to serve lunch and distribute turkeys and gift cards for the elderly on November 23.
The Varsity Football team (pictured) finished their season 4-6. Senior Don Chaney Jr. was selected to play in the All-Star All American Bowl which was held on January 4, 2020. The Junior Varsity Football team finished their season 1-5-1.

The Varsity Swimming team (pictured) finished first at the Dade County and Ransom Invitationals, second place in the district, sixth place in the region and 12th at the state competition. The Middle School Swimming team finished in second place at the Miami Country Day Meet.

The Varsity Golf team (pictured) finished their season 12-2 and as District Champions. The team finished in ninth place at the Regional Championship and 14th place at the State Championship. The Middle School Golf team ended their season 5-1.

The Varsity Bowling team finished their season 8-1 and as District Champions. The team also finished second in Dade County and qualified for their first ever State Championship.

The Varsity Cross Country team became the winningest program in the state of Florida after capturing their third consecutive State Title.

The Middle School Cross Country (pictured) won the program’s fourth FLYRA State Championship and the County and ACC Championships. Joshua Ruiz ’24 took first place at the State Championship on October 26. The Sixth Grade Cross Country finished their season as ACC Champions.

The Middle School Football team (pictured) finished their season 3-3 and the Sixth Grade Football team finished with a 7-2 record.

The Middle School Blue Volleyball team finished their season 1-7. The Gold team (pictured) celebrated an undefeated season (8-0) and as ACC Champions.

The Sixth Grade Basketball team finished their season undefeated (15-0) and as ACC Champions.
The crowd was hyped, the game was sold out and the anticipation was extraordinary. Friday Night Lights at Belen Jesuit are finally here! On September 6, our varsity football team ran onto the field through their new custom Wolverine tunnel thanks to the Fresco family and into school history.

“We’ve been waiting for this moment for over 30-years,” said Father Willie. “Let there be light” he continued as the field lights turned on and the crowd went wild.

Over 1,200 spectators were on-hand to witness the special moment. The Wolverines played the Doral Academy Falcons and earned their first win of the season.

Breton Rice opened the game with a field goal early in the first quarter, followed by a touchdown by Hayden Puente. In the second quarter, Dorian Gonzalez raised the score to 17-0. Donald Chaney Jr. ran 43-yards to score the final touchdown for the Wolverines in the third quarter and end the game at 24-0.

“This game was really important to us, we were coming off two straight losses and we all knew we worked way too hard to keep losing games,” said Puente. “Scoring the first touchdown was very exciting because I knew everyone was excited and proud. It was a great feeling.”

The atmosphere was electric. Members of the class of 2020 sported a red, white and blue theme, complete with the “Statue of Liberty”. Students led the fans in spirited cheers and enjoyed throwing baby powder in the air and stands.

The Belen Drum Line and the cheerleaders from Our Lady of Lourdes Academy helped to keep the momentum and energy high throughout the game.

“The game was a historic event for Belen, and being able to be part of the first team to play under the light was amazing,” said Rice.

At the end of the game, the football players stormed the fence closest to the stands and led a very emotional Salve Regina. Father Willie then prayed with the athletes, “We place our victory in your hands and everything we do is for your glory.”

In addition to the lights on the football field, lights were also installed on the varsity baseball field. On November 19th, a special scrimmage between the varsity and junior varsity teams was held to inaugurate the lights. The special event included Father Willie and members of the administration and coaching staff along with members of the baseball community both past and current.

Special thanks to Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz for his ongoing support, Ben Fernández ’82, and Greg Fontela ’07 our attorneys, Jose González ’91, Robert Curbelo, Carlos Huembes for their support.

Next up, the Belen Jesuit Baseball team will be playing under the lights in the spring. The baseball team will host the First Pitch Classic, a National Easter Tournament, and the District Tournament along with 12 regular-season home games in 2020.

Before the first game under the lights was played, Father Willie thanked key members of the community who helped make it possible including Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz, Ben Fernandez ’82, Jose Gonzalez ’91, Greg Fontela ’07, Robert Curbelo and Carlos Huembes.

The first football game to be played under the new field lights was held on September 6, 2019.

On November 19, 2019, the field lights on the varsity baseball were inaugurated. Father Willie and Mr. Roca, as well as other members of the administration, took part in the ceremonial pitch.
“Why do you always wear black?” my ninth-grade students asked me one day before the start of a lesson. What’s funny about the question is that I remember asking the same exact thing when I was a Belen student fifteen years ago; except back then it was Father Willie who fielded the question at the beginning of his philosophy class. His answer surprised me because of the bluntness of his answer: “black is a sign of death and St. Paul says that we are dead to the world and to sin” and he hurried on to the next question. The answer rattled deep in my imagination: priests are “dead to the world”? Why die to it if this life has so much to offer us? The answer still mesmerizes me to this day: why are priests constantly announcing “death” with their black clothes if they are so joyful?

If I had to share the many Belen experiences and their contributions to my priestly vocation, they would all coalesce into this fundamental idea so aptly expressed by St. Francis of Assisi: “for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.” This short prayer can be summarized even more in what is called the “the law of the gift.”

During my time at Belen, I quickly realized that the power of its greatness lay not just in the events that transpired from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, but in what happened during one’s free time. Here is where the law of the gift came into play. During school, we were obligated to study, read, and work under the excruciating social pressure that came with getting good grades. But after hours, that’s when one’s freedom was put into play, when one was able to offer oneself freely for whatever task was desirable.

So I spent much of my time looking for service opportunities. My favorite one was working with and feeding the poor alongside the Missionaries of Charity. They had committed their lives so absolutely to this law of the gift that for them there was no other desire greater than that of giving their life for the service of God and their fellow man. “Greater love than this no one has than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”—there’s the law of the gift as defined by the Son of God himself (John 15:13).

Not only did these extracurriculars teach me the law of the gift, but so many teachers also demonstrated this with their own graceful abilities. Mr. Zoller’s patient instruction on how to highlight a text, Mr. de Quesada’s sweeping knowledge of Western civilization, and Mr. Collin’s masterful presentation of American government: each of these taught me how to give of myself to the task at hand. Everything from Mrs. Jiménez’s wonderful passion for Hispanic literature to Armando Rodriguez’s mafioso presentation of cubanazo culture, they each taught something about giving oneself to something greater than oneself.

Some may argue that this law of the gift is at the heart of most purely humanistic values: most people know it to be good. But even our critics admit that a particularly pointed contribution of religion is that it has a refined talent to foster and protect this law of the gift. The truth is that without religion we have no Belen Jesuit, we have no Missionaries of Charity who put into practice our need to be “men for others,” without religion we have no DQ’s or...
Collins’ who show us what it means to live “for the greater glory of God.”

Many celebrate the freedoms of American democracy and we all gladly reap the benefits and comfort of modern life. But at the core of this freedom lies both the risk and the invitation to build on this law of the gift. Figures like Alexis de Tocqueville and John Courtney Murray have carefully observed that the genius of the American Republic consists of the freedom it allows for religion to flourish. Isn’t this at the heart of Belen’s unique history upon arriving at this city over sixty years ago? When Belen was expelled from a totalitarian form of government, didn’t it look for a place to continue to uphold this law of the gift? Doesn’t the freedom America affords us today give us this opportunity to show what beautiful things can be done in the name of God and our fellow man? Isn’t our freedom ultimately fulfilled and find its greatest happiness in this law of the gift?

The call to serve others as a priest comes because of schools like this one which unite people across different subjects in a desire to live from this law of the gift. Community service, good sportsmanship, excellence in education, rootedness in faith are all virtues taught at Belen and they are each expressions of the law of the gift. All of these virtues I learned from the teachers, coaches, counselors, and priests who taught with their lives the mysterious power of this profound truth. Belen has always been on the cutting edge of many things: creating STEAM centers, manicuring the campus with lush gardens, and excavating a swimming pool of Olympic proportions. Among its greatest accomplishments is its technology. Back in my day, SMART Boards were the best the world had to offer. But the same projectors and devices which once dazzled teachers and students years ago, have now aged and hang on our walls lackluster and unimpressive. Today the devices have shrunk to handheld iPads and our eyes gaze in wonder at our newly minted 3D printing abilities.

But over the course of the years, at the front and center of every classroom, there remains—unchanged and never lacking in its meaning—the greatest technological 3D display that could ever be offered to our students and our Belen community: the cross on which our savior rests.

While the world turns and devices come and go, the cross stands fixed and unchanged. And yet again we see, no longer in theory but now in the flesh of this Man what this law of the gift looks like: “Take this all of you...for this is my body, given up for you. And take, this is my blood of the new and everlasting covenant, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.” The Cross and the Eucharist both bear indelible witness to this law of the gift. The priest is the one who makes them present today.

This unchanging and essential truth—the law of the gift—motivates our every desire to strive for something greater, to yearn for something that is unending and ever new. And for this reason, the world will always be in need of a priest who can remind us of this ultimate Gift: that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.” It is because God has been so generous with us that a priest finds the energy and the ability to give his life in turn.

My prayer this year, as a priest teaching and working at Belen, is to uplift and always uphold this law of the gift so that Christ’s mission—exemplified so perfectly on the Cross and unceasingly expressed in the black clothes that I wear day in and day out—may stand at the center of our hearts today and always. God bless you Wolverine Nation!
#LetsGoBelen

August 21, 2019
I remember my first day at Belen Jesuit in Little Havana very well. I was an incoming seventh-grader. I was coming to Belen from Pinecrest Elementary School. I was terrified because I did not know one other incoming seventh-grader that year. I was assigned to Mrs. Tavel's 7A homeroom class and that is where my Belen journey began back in 1979.

"Lefty" was the first person I can recall meeting that day as he lined us up outside in the patio. To say it was a humble campus is an understatement. Wow! Little did I know at that moment, what a tremendous positive impact Father Jose Maria Izquierdo, S.J., would have on me during my next six years at Belen. Shortly thereafter, I met “Rip”. He called me into his office that first week of seventh grade to introduce himself to me and I can still remember clearly just how comforting, welcoming and warm Father Luis Ripoll, S.J., was to me during those crucial first days in this brand-new environment.

Long after I graduated from the “new” Belen in 1985, I kept in very close contact with both of those Jesuits. Their impact on my formation as a ‘Man for Others’ is palpable. Father Izquierdo and Father Ripoll are the first two people that came to mind when I was asked to write this reflection for the magazine. Of course, there are others such as Carlos “Barq” Barquin, Coach Richard Stuart and my good friend Father Guillermo “Willie” Garcia-Tuñón, S.J. Over the years, and on multiple occasions, I have expressed to them how grateful I am for their collective LIFELONG dedication to our beloved Belen! How could I not give back after witnessing their example and their direct impact on the formation of so many young men at Belen?

My closest friends today are the same guys as back then, my Belen friends. The bonds we made at Belen so many years ago remain unbreakable today. The times we shared at Belen, both good and bad; successes and failures, made us into the men we are. We have gone on to enjoy successful careers and build families together, continue to participate in each other’s lives, and even raise a few additional Belen students together. These friendships are also examples of why I give back.

God has graciously blessed me with countless gifts. For this, I remain grateful every single day. Health and emotional well-being, adoring parents and sister, a terrific marriage to the love of my life, Tessie, and three healthy and loving children Nicole, Ricardo Louis ’18, and Valentina Mayo. As much as I enjoyed my years at Belen, I enjoyed my son Ricky’s Belen years even more. Entrusting Ricky’s education and his formation in the Jesuit tradition at Belen was a very easy decision for me. This has become even clearer now after witnessing how he has continued to thrive and excel during his first year away in college at Georgetown University. Ricky’s best friends from the class of 2018 are like my own sons and I am eager to see what their future holds. These young men are also among the many reasons that I give back.

Belen will always hold a very dear place in my heart. Supporting Belen Jesuit, its students, faculty, administration, athletics, and development with my time and with my family’s resources, will always remain a top priority. If you have been impacted by Belen either as an alumnus or parent then I urge you to give back as well.
Father Guillermo M. García-Tuñón, S.J. ’87 hosted the members of the President’s Circle on December 12 in the Arroyo Quad. Anyone who contributed an annual gift of $1,500 or more is considered a member of the President’s Circle.
Manny Lamarre pictured above at his wedding with his high school football Coach Eddie Delgado ’91 and teacher Adriana Delgado. Lamarre pictured with his wedding party and his class of 2005 yearbook picture.

Manny Lamarre ’05

MAGIS

By Miguel Camacho ’21
The importance of service and the passion towards doing good for others without expecting recompense are two integral values at Belen Jesuit and the essence of what the MAGIS is about. Manoach "Manny" Lamarre '05, an esteemed alumnus from the Belen class of 2005, has held these two values very close to him throughout his life and lives them out through everything he does.

When he was a young man just starting out at Belen, he and his family lost everything when their apartment burned down. However, when word reached Belen about what had happened, the community volunteered to aid and support them without asking for anything in return. As Lamarre remembers, "One of the first people to help us was one of my Belen brothers," remembered Lamarre. "He visited us with his mom and was very kind. He eventually became a firefighter." After this demonstration of Belen brotherhood, Lamarre strived to show that same compassion and kindness in his daily life.

During his time at Belen, his teachers and coaches had high expectations of him and inspired him to work to the best of his ability. They instilled in him the value of MAGIS, which is to always do more than what is expected of you, and have the integrity to do it when no one is watching.

As an athlete, Lamarre excelled in both football and track and field. "Being an athlete meant a lot to me at Belen because I believe it made it easier to develop relationships and build connections with other students," said Lamarre. "However, the most important part of being a student-athlete at Belen was the feeling of being part of a team and the lessons that come with that experience. More specifically, being an athlete meant I had to learn how to be disciplined and balance my time efficiently between school, practice, and working part-time."

Another very important thing that he learned as a Wolverine was the true definition of "success". At Belen, he was taught that success is measured not by how much money, status, or power you receive, but from how much you grow and how you are able to overcome challenges. It is also measured by the positive impact you make on the world. "Success is not merely achieving a goal," Lamarre explains. "It is advancing a cause that one cares about." "If the goal does not lead to some type of improvement in the community, then I don't think it is really a success."

After graduating from Wittenberg University, he joined Teach for America, an AmeriCorps program that is committed to educational equity. Lamarre then taught for three years in the neighborhoods of his childhood and led a mentoring program. After receiving his master's degree, he has worked tirelessly to teach, inspire, and help others through his passion for education. As a senior member of the Nevada Governor’s Office, Lamarre helped the youth in the area be more prepared to improve and thrive in a dynamic economy through his work in education and workforce policies. Currently, he works for WestEd, where he continues to work towards his goal of providing educational equity for all.

"I've always been intentional about pursuing professional careers where my day-to-day is serving others," says Lamarre. "In addition, I have always been intentional about consistently volunteering in different capacities, such as serving as a mentor for high school students." He also lives out the MAGIS principle by spending time with family and friends, and by always making sure to be kind and loving towards them. In all the good that Manny Lamarre has done in the world, he shows us that the values taught at Belen are essential in today’s modern age. According to him, being a man for others is very important today due to the rising challenges that the world currently faces, which can only be resolved through collaboration and camaraderie. In Lamarre’s opinion, if more people learn to think outside of themselves and become committed to empathy and service, many issues such as inequality and the overwhelming amount of information can be more readily addressed. As Lamarre puts it, “One person or group cannot solve the challenges we face. Our modern challenges are too complex and nuanced and require many individuals who genuinely want to serve others (in whatever capacity they can) and show some love while they’re at it.”

"I think the best advice I would give current students who are struggling with living the MAGIS is first to remember the purpose of living the MAGIS," said Lamarre. "Students should try to find a mentor that they respect to connect with on their experiences. They should be reflective and intentional about the person they reach out to and ensure it’s someone they trust and feel comfortable with; it should also be someone that they believe is living the MAGIS in their actions, not just their words."
What was your experience like at Belen?

The first 2 words that popped into my head were: fun and challenging. Fun because I enjoyed going to school every day and spending time with my friends joking around in a carpool, in between classes (many times in class), and in sports and extracurriculars. Challenging because the teachers and Jesuits demanded rigorous academic discipline in order to achieve success in the classroom.

What is one thing that you will never forget that you learned in school?

My first year in Belen was 8th grade and one of the first lessons I ever learned was in Mr. Zoller’s Civics class. He would require us to highlight the book during reading assignments, but we could never highlight more than one of every three sentences. This would force us to isolate only what is truly important and really learn that material rather than trying to memorize the entire chapter. That is a lesson I have carried with me and it has helped me in high-school, college, graduate school and now as a professional in the real estate industry.

What type of student were you?

I was a decent student. As and Bs for the most part. I graduated with an unweighted GPA just north of 3.50. I was usually a procrastinator, waiting to study or do homework at the last minute.

Can you describe one funny moment while you were a student?

There were many funny moments, most of those stories are not publishable but some of my favorite memories are from my senior year philosophy class with Father Eduardo Alvarez S.J. ’63. Father Eddy’s class was notoriously one of the more difficult classes in Belen with the infamous “oral exams”. Although the class was hard, there were quite a few moments that made you laugh. For example, if you were ever caught sleeping in class, Father Eddy would make you stand the rest of the class or if he caught you wearing your loafers like “chancletas” he would kick them into the disciplinarian’s office.

Who made an impact in your life?

Many people have made an impact in my life, especially people from my time at Belen. These people range from parents, friends, coaches, and teachers. One quick story that has stayed with me happened back in 9th Grade. On the first day of Mr. Sucena’s Science class, he gave a speech about looking to your left and looking to your right and that one of these people will not make it through senior year at Belen. It was my first time hearing that speech, but I learned that various iterations of that speech are pretty common in real life. He added that his class was going to be challenging, that Belen will be challenging, and the only way you were going to make it was to work hard. Mr. Sucena and that particular message impacted me because it was my introduction to high school and, more importantly, it made it clear that the most important determinant of success is me. This is something I carry with me to this day.
Q What do you hold most dear?
A My wife.

Q What is the difference between a Jesuit education and other forms of education?
A I studied at Loyola University Chicago, so most of my educational experience is with the Jesuits. I believe the Jesuit’s strength in education is focused in two areas: first they expect from their students hard work and discipline as a foundation to learn the subjects at hand. This skill translates easily to the real world, where effort typically overcomes most obstacles. Second, a focus on faith and philosophy, which forces the individual to think deeply about their purpose in life, gratitude for things we don’t control and have been blessed with, challenge the status quo, and understand life’s core issues to ultimately achieve happiness individually and as a member of a community.

Q What prompted you to go into the real estate market?
A There are two people who have significantly influenced me in my real estate career. The biggest influence was my mother. She raised me as a single mother and was, and is, a real estate agent. I was heavily exposed to the real estate brokerage business from a young age. My mother and I lived through the many ups and downs of the Miami real estate market over the years and what impressed me the most about my mother was how she was able to manage the uncertainty of being self-employed and an entrepreneur. I am proud to now say that my mother is one of the most successful agents in the real estate brokerage that I own, so things have really come full circle. My second prompt to enter the real estate market was my relationship with Rick Moreno, a fellow 2003 Belen alumnus. Rick and I were friends at Belen but we did not really become close until we both started working in Chicago at Deloitte as CPAs. It was there, while spending many late nights chained to our cubicles counting beans, where we both decided that accounting was not the endgame for us, but a starting point, and we decided to become real estate brokers. Our paths diverted for a while but we both ultimately ended up back in Miami. Rick was the one who pushed me to leave the stability of the W2 life to start a business with him and now almost a decade later we own a successful brokerage and I have no regrets.

Q How do you make a difference in that industry?
A The Miami market is known as one of the most saturated markets in the country for real estate brokers, so it is important to set yourself apart in a crowded industry. I like to think I make an impact in the industry by bringing a level of professionalism and attention to detail that is often lacking in the industry. Our brokerage also likes to approach real estate from a more analytical and structured perspective because finance plays such a major role in the business and the dollar values are so huge. There are almost no barriers to entry in this industry, so there are a lot of part-time people in real estate that think they can make a quick buck by simply opening doors. As you can probably imagine, buying or selling real estate assets, especially one that you plan to call home, is a little more complicated than just having your cousin open doors or post cell phone pictures on the internet. I pride myself in doing my best to put my clients in a position to make the most important financial decision of their lives.

Q What advice do you have for the current students?
A For this question, I lean on my experience at Deloitte. I volunteered with recruiting during my time there and quickly realized that many students don’t get beyond “getting good grades” as a way to get a job after college. Students are so focused in the classroom they forget to look into the future and are so focused on themselves (their grades), that they overlook two extremely important factors to getting the great job they are working hard for. The first is understanding how the employers recruit. Employers will host speakers, career fairs, conferences, and internships for students as early as freshman and sophomore years. The students who recognize the process employers use to fill their pipelines early, will be the ones that have the relationships with the recruiters and have a leg up to the students who wait until junior year to get an internship. Second, having a relationship with the teachers in your major. The teachers are the ones that have ongoing relationships with the recruiters and help organize the events at the school. So when the recruiters, who have limited time and interview spots, need to make a decision between students, they simply call the teacher and ask them, which student they should choose. The teacher will always refer the student they have a relationship with.
For the Greater Glory
In 2017, soon after becoming President of Belen Jesuit, Father Guillermo “Willie” M. García-Tuñón, S.J. ’87 unveiled the Strategic Plan for the school. This plan laid out the roadmap for the vision and direction for the next five years. As part of the plan, four pillars were established to challenge and inspire the community: Strengthening our Catholic-Jesuit Identity, Academic Excellence, Forming Well-Rounded Men and Enhancing our Brotherhood. Since then, every effort has been made to accomplish those goals.

Concurrent with the launch of the Strategic Plan, a capital campaign emerged. During this silent phase, over $27 million were raised from both annual fund contributions and capital raised. However, the investment in the vision of the school requires the help of the whole Belen community. As such, the public phase and name of the campaign was launched at the Annual Gala held on October 26, 2019. The ‘For the Greater Glory’ campaign aims to raise $34 million by 2022.

“This is an exciting time in the history of our extraordinary school. Together we have already built the Dining Hall, The Gian Zumpano Aquatic Center, and the Arroyo Quad,” said Father Willie. “Your Annual Fund contributions have helped us achieve innovative and wonderful new projects. We’ve exceeded all previous amounts of financial assistance and have helped to make a Jesuit education a reality for many young men. But we are not done, not even close. Your generosity and your commitment are what will sustain and carry our beloved school to the next level.”

In October 2019, The Miguel B. Fernández Family Foundation pledged $1.25 million in order to advance the vision and direction of the school. This pledge is in addition to many past contributions that the foundation has made for scholarships and campus improvements.

A longtime supporter of Belen, Miguel B. Fernández is a product of a Jesuit education and his sons are proud alumni - Alex ’00 and Michael ’13. Mr. Fernández currently serves as Chairman of MBF Healthcare Partners, L.P., a private investment firm located in Coral Gables, Florida.

“We are very grateful, not only for the financial support that Mike and his family have given Belen Jesuit but also for his dedication to the Jesuit values and principles that were instilled in him as a student at Xavier High School in New York,” said Father Willie. “This pledge will go towards the cost accrued by the construction of the Dining Hall and towards the strategic efforts of the school to support our diverse initiatives.”

Mike and his wife Constance are generous philanthropists and support many local and national organizations. Their generosity has exceeded $100 million in charitable contributions over the last 20 years.

“The Jesuit principles are the foundation of who I am today,” said Fernandez. “My parents taught me to ‘take care of those who come after you’ and I’ve taken that important lesson to heart. I was blessed to have a Jesuit education and be inspired by the Jesuit ideal of ‘living for others’. I’m proud that my sons are Belen alumni and value the work that Father Willie and the Jesuits are doing.”
THE PLAN
First, we will drive innovation by creating a space where our students and their teachers can push the boundaries and explore Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math. The Roberto C. Goizueta Innovation Center will be a beacon of inspiration for our students now and in the future. It will be a symbol of excellence, not just in Miami, but around the world.

Next, we will grow in our faith and strengthen our spirituality by building a place for worship worthy of our namesake. The Our Lady of Belen Chapel will be a visible reminder to the world that we are a Catholic, Jesuit school. We are missioned to share the Gospel values, and with this holy space on campus, our students will always have a place to come together to unite as one body of Christ.

After we nurture our mind and spirit, we will turn our attention to our body and create a space where our coaches can gather to prepare and plan, where our trainers can tend to our athletes, and where our students can hone their talents and abilities. The Field House will be a place where our students can work out, lift weights, get inspired by their coaches, and dedicate themselves to wellness.

THE CHALLENGE
"This campaign is ambitious, yes, but this is only the tip of the iceberg," said Father Willie. "We will also modernize our classrooms, continue to hire only the best faculty, and foster a connection between our students and alumni so that our brotherhood continues to grow strong. ‘For the Greater Glory’ isn’t just the name of our campaign, it is our frame of mind; it represents who we are.”

Now, it is our time to stand on the shoulders of the giants who built Belen in Cuba and Miami. It is time to ignite the flame and head into the future with confidence and determination. The goal has been set and the challenge is to raise the remaining $7 million by 2022. Will you help us achieve the goal? Will you help solidify the future of Belen Jesuit? Let us push the boundaries of imagination and expand our mindset so that we can embrace the challenge.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?
How can you support Belen? You may already be doing so if you are contributing to the Annual Fund. If not, please consider making your commitment today.

If you would like to make a major gift towards the ‘For the Greater Glory’ campaign and contribute to the vision of the school, please contact Phil Fernandez ‘94 at ffernandez@belenjesuit.org or call 305-804-7683. Visit www.belenjesuit.org/forthegreaterglory to learn more about the campaign.

DRS. JOSÉ AND ADA ARMAS
In October 2019 on the eve of the Annual Gala Dr. José “Pepe” Armass’77 and his wife Dr. Ada González Armass pledged the single largest gift to the ‘For the Greater Glory’ Campaign in order to advance the vision and direction of the school. This pledge will go towards scholarships.

“The investment in the future of our student body is incredibly important, not only to Belen but to the Society of Jesus as a whole,” said Father Willie ‘87. “When St. Ignatius of Loyola founded the order, he quickly understood the importance that education has on society. It is with that vigor and determination that we as a Catholic, Jesuit school aim to assure that the possibility of a Jesuit education is an affordable option for parents. Pepe and Ada’s generosity will ensure that money is not an obstacle when a family is considering Belen Jesuit for their son.”

Dr. Armass is a proud graduate of the Belen class of 1977. He and his wife Ada are physicians and have a long and distinguished record of accomplishments in the healthcare field and are members of various boards and have contributed to many philanthropic causes.

“We are very proud that our sons - José Manuel ‘02 and Anthony Alexander ‘08 - attended Belen Jesuit, as well as our son-in-law Danny Bustamante ‘02,” said José and Ada. “During their years at Belen, they not only received a wonderful education, but they also grew in their faith and graduated as men for others. The tradition of excellence instilled by the Jesuits in education is second to none. Our commitment to the school is a gesture of love and respect for Belen Jesuit and the importance it places on educating the whole person. We know that many families would love to send their sons to Belen and we hope that with this pledge we are opening the doors to the possibility of a Jesuit education.”

The Belen Financial Assistance Program annually awards $1.8 million in tuition assistance; roughly 25% of the student body. With 165 years of experience forming young men in the over 450-year old tradition of St. Ignatius of Loyola, Belen Jesuit strives to educate the heart, mind, body, and soul of all the young men who are entrusted to our care by their parents.
Thanks to the foresight and generosity of Olga Goizueta, who remembered Belen Jesuit in her estate plans we have received a gift of $1 million which will be used to further enhance the goals set out in the Strategic Plan of the school.

The Belen Legacy Society recognizes those individuals who have remembered our school in their personal estate plans, either in their will or through another type of planned gift.

Those who remember Belen Jesuit in their will, bequest, and other estate gifts such as life insurance, charitable trusts, gift annuities, and beneficiary designation on retirement plans are vital to preserving the future of the school.

If you have made arrangements for a gift to Belen Jesuit in your will or estate plan, please contact Jorge Perez-Alvarez ’76 in the Office of Advancement at 786-621-4625.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vocation to Marriage

Tonya Gruazynski and Carlos Moreyra ’90 (left above)
Cristy Ruiz and Andres Manrara ’04 (left below)
Soraya Lopez and Gonzalo Milian ’07
Lisandra Cassola and Jorge A. Perez ’07
Michelle Blalock and Nestor Bustamante ’10
Ally Sloan and Diego Juncadella ’10
Liz Morales and Victor de Zarraga ’11

Vocation to Family

Joaquin Jude
son of Xavier Gonzalez ’98
Nicolas Andres
son of Javier Cruz ’04
Jorge Claver
son of Mike Wood ’04
Elle Everly
dughter of Arturo Cepero III ’06
Mia Valentina
dughter of Alexander Peña ’06
Paxton Wayne
son of Marcos Segrera ’06
Jorge Ignacio
son of Jorge Mendia ’08
Matthew Benjamin
son of Ed Newborn
Director of Campus Ministry
Jackson
son of Shane Walker
Belen Teacher

If you would like to submit an announcement for consideration please send it to alumni@belenjesuit.org.
In Memoriam

MANUEL ARVESU ‘46
FRANCISCO “PANCHO” DELGADO ‘48
JULIO HERNANDEZ-MIYARES ‘48
ANTONIO COLAS-GOIZUETA ‘53
SERGIO MENENDEZ APONTE ‘53
NARCISO M. MACIA ‘54
ARTURO BAGUER BOSQUE ‘55
HUGO CORRIERI RANDIN ‘55
WALTER VOIGT LOPEZ-GOBEL ‘55
PABLO CUEVAS ‘55
PEDRO PEREZ-MAJUL ‘55
REINALDO LOPEZ-LIMA ‘56
NICOLAS RODRIGUEZ ‘56
JORGE MIRANDA ‘58
GASTON RODRIGUEZ ‘61
RAMON ALONSO ‘71
MARIO RUIZ DE LA TORRE ‘73
CARLOS YANEZ ‘80
GUSTAVO ORTIZ ‘89
CARLOS GONZALEZ ‘97
EMMANUEL GOMEZ ‘07
CARLOS RAFFO - DOLORES

DEAN CARR
son of Alex Carr ‘96

ROSITA LAMELA
mother of Charles Lamela Sr. ‘89
and grandmother of Charles Jr. ‘19
and Andrew Lamela ‘22

ROSSINA FERNANDEZ
mother of Adolfo Fernandez ‘89,
aunt of Roberto Vich ‘94
and great aunt of Gabriel Vich ‘25

CARMEN TOMASINO
mother of Nicholas Tomasino ‘11

ELIZABETH ORTA
mother of Jorge ‘13 and Jonathan Orta ‘16
and sister of Jose Rodriguez ‘84

LIDIA LAZCANO ARAN
mother of Alberto ’72, Fernando ’75,
and Mandy Aran ’80 and grandmother of Tico ‘04,
Ferny ’06, Robert ’08, and Brendan Aran ‘23

MARGARITA ACERES
mother of Luis Caceres ’84

JORGE L. DELGADO
father of Jorge X. ‘88 and Alberto Delgado ‘93, father-in-
law of Jorge Portuondo ’77, grandfather of Ignacio ’00,
Andres ’02 and Jorge Portuondo ’09,
Daniel ’21 and Michael Delgado ’23,
and John-Patrick Stanfield ’22

MIRIAM HERRERO
mother of Gabriel Herrera ‘90

RICHARD STUART, SR.
father of Belen Jesuit’s Associate
Athletic Director Rich Stuart

MAURY STONE HAGERMAN
father of Belen Teacher Karen Ortiz

ALAYR LIPPI SERAFIM
grandmother of Victor Arrieta ’95

DULCE MARIA FIGUERAS
grandmother of Juan Carlos Figueras ’84 and
great-grandmother of Joseph John Parlade ’17

JUAN JIMENEZ
grandfather of Richard Blanco ’91 Ian Merkel,
son-in-law of Guillermo Garcia-Tuñon ’66

FATHER OTTO MARTINEZ, S.J.
former Belen Jesuit Teacher and Counselor

EDUARDO DIHARCE
brother of Carlos Diharce, S.J. ’59

LATONYA DOUGLAS
sister of Disciplinarian
and Coach Don Chaney Sr.

MARTA PEREZ GARCIA
sister of Eduardo Perez Garcia ’61
1940s, 1950s, 1960s

Members of the classes of 1960 & 1961, at the May luncheon, with memorabilia donated by the family of PEDRO PERTIERRA ’61.

MIGUEL ESCALA ’67 was distinguished as Professor Emeritus at the Instituto Tecnologico de Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

1970s

DR. ARTURO MOSQUERA ’71 and RICARDO PAU-LLOSA ’71 were featured in an art exhibition in Buenos Aires sponsored by BEAMS.

CARLOS MANUEL VAZQUEZ ’75 was installed as a Scott K. Ginsburg Professor of Law at Georgetown University.

The play, “90 Miles of Separation”, by TONY MACY-PEREZ ’78, was featured at Summerfest, during the New York Theater Festival.

1980s

Belen Sports Hall of Fame member Jose Pañeda ’82 returned to his alma mater to speak to the WBLN students about his role as “La Voz”, the Spanish Radio Broadcaster of the local NBA franchise the Heat.

JORDI GUSO ’83 was elected by Berger Singerman’s equity partners to a 4-year term as the firm’s managing partner.

DR. ROGELIO RIBAS ’83 was promoted to Corporate Vice President of Baptist Health International, part of Baptist Health of South Florida.

COL. ARMANDO FITERRE ’86 (pictured with wife Aymee) retired after 28-plus years of service in the US Air Force.

CARLOS TORRES DE NAVARRA ’86 was named CEO of Holistica, a destination development company.

HENRY DOCE ’80 was promoted to the rank of Major and ERIC GARCIA ’88 to the rank of Captain within the Miami Beach Police Department.

Rev. Jesse Jackson, TONY GONZALEZ ’89, President Bill Clinton, Boxing Promoter Don King, World Boxing Council President Mauricio Sulaiman and ALEX BRITO ’89 at the Inaugural George H.W. Bush Points of Light Gala in New York City.

DAVID DE CELIS ’89 has qualified for the 2020 USA Triathlon National Championships next August in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

1990s

The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce awarded their “Salute to Miami’s Leaders” awards to CESAR CONDE ’91 as ‘Visionary of the Year’ and FRANKIE RUIZ ’96 as, Bill Colson Leadership Award’ winner.

FR. PATRICK KOKORIAN, M.M.A ’93 was elected abbot of the Most Holy Trinity Monastery.

GERALD DEL AMO ’99 was promoted to Deputy General Counsel at Broward Health.
2000s

THOMAS PLA '00 joined Ocean Bank as Vice President in their Private Client Services department.

RICARDO DE LEMOS '07 was promoted to Manager of Global Business Operations for Site Network of Bioclinica, Inc.

ADRIAN LORENZO '07 was featured in The Athletic for his work evaluating talent for the Miami Marlins.

Congratulations to MAX MARTINEZ '09 who was featured on Disrupt online highlighting his achievements in the business industry.

ARMANDO MENDEZ '08 was named an Assistant United States Attorney in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida.

JAVIER CUADRA '09 and his company, Milca Bottling Co., were featured in a Miami Herald article.

THOMAS PLA '00

RICARDO DE LEMOS '07

ADRIAN LORENZO '07

MAX MARTINEZ '09

ARMANDO MENDEZ '08

JAVIER CUADRA '09

2010s

NICHOLAS ALVAREZ '10 was named the Legislative Affairs Director for the Dept. of Economic Opportunity in the state of Florida.

CHRISTIAN MARRERO '12 graduated from Florida International University as a Doctor of Physical Therapy. Pictured with: MATTHEW '13, GABRIEL '22, and RUBEN MARRERO '75.

UM medical students RICHARD BARRIOS '10 and ANDRES RODRIGUEZ '09 presented a pair of cases during their Intern and Resident Report.

FRANCISCO GONZALEZ '13 starred as, Matt in “The Fantasticks” at the Weston Playhouse in Vermont.

LEO COSIO '14 was profiled in FIU NEWS.

IÑIGO SAGARDUY '15, captain of the nationally ranked #19 FIU Men's Soccer Team, advanced to the Conference USA Tournament Semifinals.

ARIEL JIMENEZ '16 was named Defensive Player of the Week at John Carroll University.

NICHOLAS ROCA '16, pictured with his brother, JOSE E. ROCA JR. '13, graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelors in Media/Communications Studies at Florida State University.

C.J. VAZQUEZ '17, currently attending Fordham University, was named to the All-Tournament Team for the Atlantic 10 Conference in Baseball. The Fordham Rams were the 2019 Conference Champions.

JONATHAN BARDITCH '18, attending Manhattan College, received the All-Rookie award for the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference in Baseball.

NICHOLAS PEREZ BLANCO '18 received his National Championship Ring as a member of the Merrimack College Warriors men's Lacrosse Team.

SAGUA

BR. ERIC COUTO, S.J. '13 and 11 other novice brothers made their first vows in Grand Coteau, LA.

CARLOS GONZALEZ, FLORENTINO RODRIGUEZ, FR. MARCELINO GARCIA, SJ, FR. NELDO HERNANDEZ, HENRY PUJOL and ALEJANDRO BIENES at a Belen monthly Alumni Luncheon.
Members of the Class of 1954 attend their 65-year reunion at the Big Five Club.

Mass in the Chapel of Our Lady.

Ramon and Migdalia Alonso, Mercedes and Carlos Morales.

Rodolfo and Mirna Beguiristain, Vicky and Fernando Dominicis.

Doris and Carlos Poveda, Margarita and Octavio Capetillo.

Emilio and Delia Martinez Venegas, Gloria del Villar, Josefina and Carlos Balerdi.

Eduardo and Ana Garcia, Miriam and Julian Perez Corso.

Luis Fernandez de Castro, Gloria Gasset, Fr. Pedro Cartaya S.J. and Jesus Jordan.
Attending Mass at the Chapel of Our Lady.

Ana and Rene Villa, Ana and Nemesio Viso, Karen and Jose Coronas, Fr. Jorge Cela S.J., Ramon Espino, Alberto and Joy Rovira.

Omar and Maggie Salazar, Eduardo Martinez, Valentina and Juan Calvo, Juan J. Menendez Mendizabal, Maria Soledad Leon, Leonidas and Rolando Camargo, and Rosalind Guerra.

Antonio and Silvia Piñera, Fr. Alberto Garcia S.J., Antonio and Irma Abella, Octavio and Chene Sust, and Carlos Obregon.

Pablo and Silvia Zamora, Alberto Blanco, Estela Sonville, Eddy and Miriam Casares, Ramiro and Tatiana Palma.

Domingo and Pilar Rodriguez, Tina and Jesus Ayo, Pablo Perez Zamora, Alberto Segrera, Rafael and Sonia Mozo.

Maggie Salazar, Jose A. Lugo, Juan Santa Coloma, Osvaldo Lopez Sierra, Susan Lopez Sierra, Dale and Frank Pardo, Fernando and Ana Casado, Patricia Santa Coloma, and Lucy Lugo.
Members of the Class during Mass.

J. Ardura and A. Garrido with Fr. Ernesto Fernandez-Travieso S.J. and Fr. Alberto Garcia S.J.

Members of the Class of '69.

G. Sims, J. Jimenez and R. Walker.


Conversations after Mass.

Mr. and Mrs. Puente, Mr. and Mrs. Arazoza, Mr. and Mrs. Figueras, Mr. and Mrs. Consuegra and Mr. and Mrs. Sori.

Members of the Class of ’84.

Members of the Class of ’84.


Members of the Class of ’84.

F. Puente, J. Figueras, A. Arazoza, H. Sori and A. Consuegra.
2009

Members of the Class of ’09 at their 10-year reunion.

Fr. Cartaya, S.J. ’54 celebrating Mass at the Chapel of Our Lady.

Attendees at the Mass in the Chapel of Our Lady.

Members of the Class at the Garrido Family Plaza.

Members of the Class and families.

Some members and families visiting Belen Jesuit.

Michael Martinez, S.J. addressing his classmates.

Members of the Class back in the Belen classroom.
Dolores alumni with Fr. Pedro Suarez, S.J. ’58 during Mass at the Chapel of Our Lady.

Dolores alumni and families attending their yearly reunion.

Lunch at the Cosculluela Hall.

Aristides and Sandra Berenguer, Carlos and Virginia Berenguer, Pedro and Esther Haber, Gumersindo and Daisy Danger.

Guillermo and Edna Reveron, Roberto and Lydia Olmedo, Fernando and Ada Casado, Jorge and Vanesa Sainz.

Nemesio and Ana Viso, Pedro and Ileana de Oña, Carlos and Rosa Santa Cruz, Tony and Elvira Casal, Rafael and Saba Millares.

Tony and Gladys Bellon, Roberto and Maria Blanco, Anibal and Lourdes Garcia, Ignacio and Gini Espino, Mr. and Mrs. Pedro Gonzalez, Santiago and Ma. Cristina Eljaiek.

Carlos Santa Cruz, Tony Casal, Nemesio Viso, Pedro Haber, Fernando Casado and Roberto Olmedo celebrate 60 years since their graduation.
ALUMNI GATHERINGS

Juan Carlos Robaina ’04, Thomas Pla ’00, Damian Penichet ’03, and Jason Oliver ’07 at a CARROLLTON / SAFE – ACRES Networking event at Gringo’s Oyster Bar.

The alumni who attended the 2019 Soccer Alumni Event at Belen Jesuit. The first annual Copa Wolverine, donated by Mr. Daniel Suniga ’93, was won by the team featuring members from the classes of 1992 and 2002.

Over 70 alumni attended the Cigar Event at Laz’s Garage. Special thanks to Jonathan Alfonso ’99 and Lazaro Marcos ’92.

Members of the Class of 1957 celebrating their Annual Reunion at Belen Jesuit.

Andres Millon and members of the Class of 2007 Andres Castillo, Daniel Mendez, Aran Matheus, Michael Chisholm, David Fraguio, Reinaldo Mouriz, Gregory Fontela and Agustín de Goytisolo at a Padres-Marlins game.

Raul de la Heria ’79, Jorge Zaragozi ’75, René Lamar ’73, Frank Vianello ’74, and Luis Hernandez ’74 at the parador nacional Santillana Del Mar in Cantabria, Spain.

Ariel Jimenez ’16, Mario Robaina ’16, and Aramis Castaño ’19 at a scrimmage between John Carroll University and Case Western Reserve University in Ohio.

Pre-Belen vs. Columbus networking event at Galiano Cigar Room.
Alumni Tour to New Orleans.

Dot Health CEO Jose Rasco ’97, Twitter Head of US Hispanic Marco Botero ’97, Sportsmanias CEO Vicente Fernandez ’10, Twitter Co-founder and CEO Jack Dorsey, eMerge Americas CEO Felice Gorordo ’01 and KnitCrate CEO Roberto Colon ’04.

ACRES members who attended the tour originating out of Sweet Mercy Brewing Co. in Coconut Grove.

Lenny Rodriguez ’83, Orlando Garcia ’88, Alex Gomez-Pina ’93 Tony Franjie ’86, and Michael Gomez ’88 at the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Happy Hour at Belen Jesuit.

The Belen Alumni Tour made its final stop of the calendar year in Puerto Rico.

Tommy de Quesada ’94 and his children with Catholic University of America players, Gabe Aparicio ’18 and Papo Garcia ’17 in New London, Connecticut.

Andres Guisasola ‘16, Jorge Guisasola ’84, Alejandro Brito ’89, Mariano Brito ’21 and Javier Brito ’24 with family at Andres’ Senior Game at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Members of the Class of 1956 celebrate an annual reunion at Belen Jesuit.

#BelenForLife
The #BJesuitEducated campaign highlights prominent alumni on our social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to reinforce the Ignatian tradition of excellence in education, leadership, and service. These alumni only represent a small fraction of the thousands of young men educated at Belen in Cuba and in Miami that exemplify the Magis.
I often tell graduating seniors that their best Belen years are ahead of them. I love the look of disbelief on their faces. They ask, “How is that possible after we’ve just had the greatest years at Belen?” Yet we Alumni know it is true: the short time that we spend at Belen as students lays the foundation for a lifetime of brotherhood and the brotherhood of a lifetime.

The academic rigors, Jesuit guidance, and community service that we experienced while we were students at Belen (along with the all-night study sessions, the parties and the pranks) unite us across the generations of Alumni. Somehow, those distinct experiences—whether at the Belen in Cuba, or on Calle Ocho, or the current magnificent campus—define us with a common character. But they are more than mere nostalgia. We come back to Belen not just to relive old memories, but to make new ones. It is that sense of brotherhood that draws us to Belen.

It’s the reason we bring our families to Tombola (and the pan con lechón and mojitos, too). It’s the reason we distribute meals at Thanksgiving and toys at Christmas at Gesu. It’s the reason we organize the formal Class Reunions and informal domino nights. It’s the reason we network and support each other professionally and personally. It’s the reason we come together to celebrate in times of happiness, and for comfort in times of sadness. It’s the reason we teach, coach and mentor young Wolverines. It’s the reason we give to the Annual Fund, so a Belen education can remain affordable for future generations. In sum, it’s the reason we devote our time, treasure and talent to our beloved Belen. It is our calling to continue to be Men for Others, to be alumni for life. In the end, the joy and memories that we create as alumni are what make these our best Belen years. These truly are the best of times.

And if you want to do even more for Belen—if you choose to strive for the Magis—I encourage you to become a Class Delegate or run for the Alumni Board of Directors or lead one of the Professional Sections. The time and effort you put into this worthy cause will be the greatest reward. I promise. For me, it has made the best Belen years even better.

So, as this is my last President’s Alumni Magazine message, I want to thank Belen for this extraordinary brotherhood, for the opportunity to serve and lead our Alumni Association, for these best of times and for what is yet to come. Thank you.

AMDG,

Antonio C. Castro ’86
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