

The A-B Tech Foundation announced today that the College has received a \$50,000 challenge gift in support of the Ivy Building Renovation Project as a way to honor the work and leadership of former St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall Headmaster Joseph M. Lalley.

St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall alumni and brothers Andrew Blum (class of 1976), Leonard Blum (class of 1978) and Robert Blum (class of 1981) are pledging up to \$50,000 to match dollar-for-dollar gifts from St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall alumni, friends, and families as an incentive to reach a \$100,000 total. This will allow the main floor of the renovated St. Genevieve's auditorium, now known as the Ivy Building, to be named in honor of Lalley.

Recent graduates, in particular, remember the remarkable dedication of Lalley, whose tireless energy and perpetual efforts kept the school alive. He led St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall as a strong center of education in the Asheville community after he had already given twenty-plus years to the Gibbons Hall boys. As Leonard Blum has noted, "We all recall that Joe took great pride in and nurtured not only the school but also each individual student. Joe cared deeply about the students and faculty as the lifeblood and mission of St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall. He also did everything the school needed to survive and thrive. Whenever there was a need, he was teacher, coach, bus driver, in addition to fulfilling a greater-than-full-time role as headmaster and fundraiser."

ABOUT THE RENOVATION PROJECT

Many are familiar with the hard work former St. Genevieve's and Gibbons Hall students, families, and supporters put into saving the last remaining building of the school, the Auditorium now known as the "Ivy Building," from demolition. A-B Tech President Dennis King is fully committed to a restoration and renovation of the structure, slated to cost \$1.8 million. The College has dedicated \$1.3 million to the project from the recent state Connect NC bond referendum, with a fundraising initiative under way to raise the remaining funding gap of \$500,000.

"In its heyday, hundreds of students passed through the doors of the St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall Auditorium. The building was the center of the school, and now serves as a symbol of the many schools that thrived on Victoria Road," said Stuart Camblos, co-chair of the Ivy Renovation Project Steering Committee and member of the St. Genevieve's class of 1966. "The restoration of the 'Ivy Building' will continue providing opportunities for current and future A-B Tech students and the community, while weaving the important history of St. Genevieve's and Gibbons Hall into Asheville's tapestry."

Other naming and memorial opportunities are available through the campaign to honor families, classmates, former nuns and teachers, or anyone else for whom the Ivy Building holds special memories. For more details on the plans for the restoration, visit the Ivy Renovation webpage at www.abtech.edu/ivy, or contact the A-B Tech Foundation at 828-398-7567. To play a part in this dollar-for-dollar challenge match, visit www.abtech.edu/donate (designate your contribution to the Ivy Renovation Project), or mail your gift to the A-B Tech Foundation at 340 Victoria Road, Asheville, NC 28801.

ABOUT ST. GENEVIEVE's and GIBBONS HALL

In the early 1900s, nuns from the French order of Religious of Christian Education received a request to come to the United States and establish an orphanage in Wheeling, West Virginia. Once the orphanage was securely in place, the French Sisters chose Asheville as a location for a school for young women. Founded in 1908, St. Genevieve-of-the-Pines flourished in various incarnations for over 75 years. What began in a house on Starnes Avenue with 22 students grew to 18 acres on Victoria Road at what is now Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. In 1949, the school expanded its campus and focus to include Gibbons Hall, a school for boys in grades one through eight. At peak popularity, the school enrolled 500 students and its campus expanded to include classrooms, physical education fields, dorms for boarding students, a cafeteria, and residences for the nuns.

Declining enrollment and rising costs forced St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall to merge with another struggling school – Asheville Country Day School. Thus in 1987, the Asheville Country Day School site on Hendersonville Road became a new school known as Carolina Day School. The Victoria Road site of St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall was then sold to A-B Tech.

For those who attended St. Genevieve's or Gibbons Hall, the memories of the school run deep, especially those involving the auditorium. Over the years, the auditorium witnessed basketball games, science fairs, year-end plays, recitals, dances, assemblies, and student graduations.