



The Garces Memorial Alumni Board presents
the 15th annual

Hall of Honor



Damon Culbertson



Steve Lewis '64



Rich Romo '70



Jeremy Tobias '84



The Mike & Laura Etcheverry
Family

Thursday, November 16, 2023

A Message From The Chairman

Welcome to the 15th annual Garces Memorial High School Hall of Honor Awards Banquet. The Hall of Honor was established in 2008 to publicly recognize and pay tribute to individuals who have demonstrated a continuing commitment to, and promotion of, the values, mission, and philosophy of Garces Memorial High School.

Tonight, the Hall of Honor will recognize and pay tribute to four very deserving individuals and one very special family. The 2023 Hall of Honor inductees are Damon Culbertson, Steve Lewis, Rich Romo, and Jeremy Tobias. The 2023 Garces Alumni Award will be given to The Mike & Laura Etcheverry Family.

The inductees and the Etcheverry family are long-time supporters of Garces and advocates for Garces Memorial in the local community. It is due to people like them that Garces has a rich history of alumni and families who make Garces possible. We have included a brief biography of each of them on the following pages.

Garces Memorial High School is a very special place, a place that was founded in faith 76 years ago, is rooted in tradition, and growing in excellence. With that in mind, there is a common thread that binds tonight's honorees - they have proudly and courageously upheld the values of our school and have brought pride to the good name of Garces Memorial High School. Their involvement with our school, and with the greater Garces community, has been selfless, generous, and integral to the history and to the future of Garces Memorial High School.

Thank you for joining us this evening as we honor these wonderful people for all they have done and continue to do for Garces Memorial High School.



Gregg Gunner '66

Chairman

Garces Memorial Alumni Board

Garces Memorial Alumni Board 2023 Board Members

Gregg Gunner '66
Chairman

Cindy (Duncan) Lynch '68
Tom Swerdfager '69
James Sakowski '70
Carolyn Antongiovanni '72
Melissa Fortune '72
Mike Georgino '75
George Clerou '76

Kati (Anspach) Whittington '77
Bernadette (Eyherabide) Root '78
Raji Sanghera '87
Maria (Bernal) Toretta '88
Courtney (Kirschenman) Tobias '92
Lexi (Antongiovanni) Clerou '06
John Moore III '07

Hall of Honor Agenda

5:00 - 6:30 pm

No-host Cocktails

6:30 - 6:45 pm

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Gregg Gunner '66, Alumni Board Chairman

Special Guest

Noel Leon, Garces Principal

Dessert Dash Details

Maria Toretta, Alumni Board Member

Opening Prayer

Fr. David Lopez, Garces Chaplain

6:45 - 7:30 pm

Dinner

7:30 - 7:45 pm

Alumni Scholarship Dessert Dash

7:45 - 8:45 pm

Induction Ceremony

DAMON CULBERTSON

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Bernadette Root '78

STEVE LEWIS '64

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Mike Georgino '75

RICH ROMO '70

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Jim Sakowski '70

JEREMY TOBIAS '84

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Courtney Tobias '92

8:45 - 9:00 pm

THE 2023 GARCES ALUMNI AWARD

THE MIKE & LAURA ETCHEVERRY 'FAMILY

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Katie Whittington '77

9:00 - 9:30 pm

Closing Remarks

Gregg Gunner '66

Closing Prayer

Fr. Theo Antony, St. Francis Church

Garces Alma Mater, The 3rd Generation of Etcheverry's

Jeff '02, Rosie '05, Jenny '06, Amy '10, David '13, & Christine '16

Damon Culbertson

*Introduction by Alumni Board Member
Bernadette Root '78*

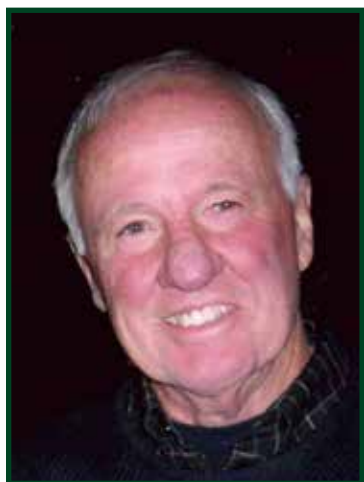


Damon Culbertson began his involvement with Garces when he married Garces alumna, Joti (Sanghera) '86. Through the years, Damon supported Garces, knowing that one day his and Joti's children would attend Garces. All four of their children are Garces alumni – Allie '11, Tallia '13, Yasmine '16, and Max '19.

While their children were at Garces, Damon became a staunch supporter – attending games and becoming a “go-to” person for the Garces community. Over the last 20 years, Damon has supported the BBQ, Gala, The Garces Fund, A Night at the Races, Nashville Nights, and the Monsignor Leddy Golf Tournament. Damon has been the title sponsor of the golf tournament since 2011 helping the school raise much needed funds in support of student programs. He quietly supported students who he knew would greatly benefit from a Garces education but needed financial help to do so.

Damon helped to spearhead renovations and remodeling efforts with respect to the Mengha Sanghera Student Collaborative Learning Center, Sam Tobias Field, and the Campbell Field House. He continues to be an ambassador for Garces in the Bakersfield community and continues to sponsor Garces events.

Damon is a pillar of both the Garces and the Bakersfield communities. He owns and operates three successful businesses. He currently sits on the National Advisory Board for Subaru Automotive. In addition to his support of Garces Memorial, he contributes time and resources to The Edible Schoolyard, Covenant Coffee, Victory Family Services, and Meals on Wheels.



Steve Lewis '64

*Introduction by Alumni Board Member
Mike Georgino '75*

Steve Lewis is a 1964 graduate of Garces Memorial High School. While at Garces, Steve played football, basketball, and baseball. His senior year he was named All-Area in all three sports. His classmates voted him Homecoming King and he was the treasurer of the Letterman Club.

After graduating from Garces, Steve went on a football scholarship to the University of California, Berkeley and played football and baseball. He was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates as a minor league

baseball pitcher, but due to having arm troubles, he decided on a new path and graduated from Fresno State with a business degree. Fun fact! Steve and his high school sweetheart, Sharon Mohr, class of '64, dated through college and got married between Steve's UC Berkeley and minor league career. They have been married for 55 years.

Steve and Sharon sent all three of their children through Garces – Mike Lewis '87, Jennifer Lewis '91, and Debbie Lewis '99. While Steve's children were at Garces, he was a fixture on our campus. He attended volleyball, football, basketball, baseball, and softball games, and even some theater. He coached the boy's baseball team for two years, won a Valley Championship and was named the All-Area Coach of the Year. He was also an unofficial assistant coach for the girl's softball team for a season or two. He spent countless hours working to upgrade our facilities. Many alumni fondly recall seeing Mr. Lewis up on campus volunteering his time and experience or attending his children and grandchildren's events. His favorite spot to watch will always be pacing on the sidelines, away from the crowds.

In talking about Garces, Steve never fails to mention Brother Gerald and the positive impact that his Catholic education had on his life. Steve has been successful in real estate management in Kern County for over 50 years, known as Steven P. Lewis Investments, and remains a passionate and active individual philanthropist who likes to anonymously donate his time and resources to local organizations. Never one to toot his own horn, Steve prefers to stay under the radar. In fact, a few old friends, classmates, and family have had to twist his stubborn arm to accept this public honor, not once but twice.

Steve has been, and continues to be, an ambassador for Garces and has generously contributed annually in support of our school's mission.



Rich Roma '70

Introduction by Alumni Board Member

Jim Sakowski '70

Rich graduated from Garces in 1970 after transferring from BHS midway through his junior year. He played football, basketball and baseball at Garces and was part of the championship football team in '69, the first year of the Garces-BHS rivalry. The Rams soundly defeated the Drillers on their home field 21-0 and Rich had two interceptions. He was on the honor roll his junior and senior years. After graduation he served in the US Air Force for 4 years and returned to Bakersfield for a brief period. Then

in 1977 he moved to Phoenix AZ and became a union Ironworker. While visiting an old Garces classmate in Ventura in 1981, he met Marianne and they married in 1982 at the San Buenaventura Mission. They both started successful real estate careers in 1985 and are still living and working in Oxnard's beautiful beach and marina areas.

In 2001, one of Rich's best friends from Garces, Gino Colombo, passed away suddenly in San Francisco where he lived after high school. In 2002 Rich started a golf tournament in his honor, to keep Gino's NorCal and SoCal friends connected. The first year was so much fun he decided to make it an annual event, played midway between Bakersfield and San Francisco. The second year he collected extra money along with the entry fee to donate to charities and after three years of contributing to various causes, Rich created a remembrance that would be more permanent. A Garces scholarship bearing Gino's name originated in 2007. He collaborated with Tonya Abbott at Garces to filter the annual golf donations toward scholarships for students in need. The recipients would have to closely embody Gino's work ethic, love for Garces and sports and his caring personality. After 11 years of tournaments at Stevenson Ranch Golf Course, Rich brought the tournament to Bakersfield Country Club for three more years. In 2016, since everyone was getting older and not playing as much golf, he started soliciting contributions via email, text, and a Facebook Group page. This method of fundraising has worked well and to date he has collected donations exceeding \$152,000. He's kept in contact with most of the 34 scholarship recipients to track their progress and has received countless letters and emails from them, sharing many of their updates with the donors. Everyone has felt so much satisfaction from seeing how well the students have progressed in life and how grateful they are to have experienced the fine education and environment that Garces provides.

Rich developed a huge passion for golf and shares that with their son Alex who played golf for and graduated from Cal Poly SLO in 2014 with a business/marketing degree. He lives in LA and has an exciting multifaceted career as a professional golfer and social media influencer.



Jeremy Tobias '84

*Introduction by Alumni Board Member
Courtney Tobias '92*

Jeremy Tobias graduated from Garces Memorial High School in 1984. He was a three-sport athlete, playing football, soccer, and baseball. He also participated in the Marine Corps physical fitness team and was a member of the Lettermen Club. Jeremy went on to graduate from San Diego State University in 1989.

In 1990 he married Susan (Etcheverry) '86 and they have three children who all attended Garces – Emily '11, Molly '12, and Jack '18. They are the

proud grandparents of two future Rams – Eloise & Amelia.

In 2009 Jeremy was appointed as CEO at Community Action Partnership of Kern. His professional life has consisted of experience in non-profit administration, government administration, and private land use and planning and development. Prior to CAPK, he served as the Vice President of Community Development at SunCal Companies, Assistant City Manager at City of Shafter, and City Manager at the City of Delano. In addition to being the CEO of CAPK, Jeremy and his wife Susan are the owners of JoRonCo Party Rentals.

While Jeremy's children were at Garces, he was a fixture on our campus – football games, volleyball games, basketball games, baseball games, swim meets, wrestling and any other activity his children participated in. He helped cook at BBQ's, volunteered at team retreats, set up events, sold tickets, whatever was needed. He was a football team "field paint dad", baseball team dad, and a founding member of the Hail Mary Club. As a founding member of the Hail Mary Club, he was instrumental in the gym lobby remodel, gym bathroom remodel, refurbishment of the Campbell Field House, new sound system at Sam Tobias Field - just to name just a few of their projects. He coordinated BBQs and dinners for various athletic teams, and established football team "work days" at Food Bank distribution events, encouraging the student athletes to give back to the community.

Jeremy served on the Garces Alumni Board for six years, three of them as the chairman. He bleeds Garces green and has served on numerous committees and special assignments for the betterment of the school. Jeremy and Susan are proud supporters of school and the Garces Gala, Holy Smoke BBQ, and the Monsignor Leddy Golf Tournament.

2023 Garces Alumni Award

The Mike & Laura Etcheverry Family

Introduction by Alumni Board Member Katie Whittington '77



Mike and Laura both graduated from Garces in 1977. Laura was the first one in her family to attend and Mike was a second generation Garces Ram. They were high school sweethearts, got married after college, and raised six wonderful children who are third-generation Garces Rams. Jeff Etcheverry '02, Rose (Etcheverry) Cook '05, Jenny Etcheverry '06, Amy (Etcheverry) Dawes '10, David Etcheverry '13, and Christine Etcheverry '16.

Mike and Laura have embraced and supported Catholic education their entire lives. They have dedicated countless hours to both St. Francis School and Garces Memorial High School, where they remain active to this day. In 2015, they were the first recipients of the St. Francis Legacy of Excellence Award.

Mike and Laura have always been loyal supporters of their alma mater and help out whenever asked. Mike and his late father, John Etcheverry, who was inducted into the Garces Hall of Honor in 2009, built the fence around the school, that still stands today. They are proud sponsors of the Garces Gala, the Fall BBQ and the Hail Mary Club. They have donated dinners at their home, cooked dinner for the Casual Night Gala and sponsored various auction items to help raise funds for Garces. They have served on several boards and committees, including the Gala and the St. Francis Foundation.

While their children attended Garces, Mike and Laura were very active and devoted parents. They attended countless events, from football and volleyball to swimming and tennis. Together, they were the team parents and hosted pasta feeds at their home. Mike and Laura were very committed to their children's education and never missed an opportunity to show their support for both the school and their family. Outside of Garces, they are active supporters of both Catholic Charities, Bakersfield Angels and St. Francis Church.

Mike and Laura continue to be wonderful ambassadors for Garces Memorial. Not only do they continue to be present on our campus in support of other students, but they also encourage others to send their children to our school. Although their children have graduated, Mike and Laura continue to give their time, talent and treasure to Garces. Each year, they continue to donate to the Hail Mary Club events, raising thousands of dollars for Garces Memorial.

Their love of Garces has now been passed onto their children. This year, Jeff was on the committee for the Garces Memorial Holy Smoke BBQ and led the BBQ team. Jenny is on the Hail Mary Club Board and organizes their fundraisers, including last year's 75th Anniversary Wing Ding. Christine serves on the FFA Advisory Board. Rosie, Amy, and David, alongside their siblings, volunteer their time to help give back to St. Francis School, the Hail Mary Club and Garces Memorial High School. The Mike and Laura Etcheverry Family are a role model of what it means to be a Garces Legacy Family.

Special Thank You to Tonight's Sponsors

Thank you to tonight's Hall of Honor sponsors. Their generosity allows us to provide a complimentary table and awards to each of our inductees and a printed program for each of our guests.

Inductee Sponsor Level

Steve & Kari Anderson
A+ Shredding/Joe Antongiovanni '89
Janet & Steven Antongiovanni '76
Christiane (Arduain) Camou '93
Eleanor Etcheverry
Paige Etcheverry-Barnes '86
Nanette Etcheverry '96 & John Etcheverry '88
Melissa Fortune '72 & Bruce Beretta
Kathy Gargan '69- Gargan-Harrison Families
Michael Georgino '75
Hail Mary Club
Germaine Jacobs '74 & Chris Jacobs '74
Marianne Laxague '58
Jennifer Lewis '91
Luigi's Restaurant & Delicatessen
Jenny (Maitia) Poncetta '70
Bernadette Root '78
Melanie Sanghera '83
Raji Sanghera '87
Courtney Tobias '92 & Justin Tobias '91

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Kenneth M. Peters CLU '50
Mary Ann Putman '75 & Family
Debra & Jim Sakowski '70
Susan Swertfager '71 & Tom Swertfager '69

Garces Memorial Hall of Honor Inductees

2008 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Honorable Robert Anspach '54
The Late Rev. Msgr. Ralph Belluomini '51
The Late Anthony Cornejo '51
Mrs. Helen Reischman Haller '57
The Late Dr. Gerald Haslam '55
The Late Mr. Joe Hernandez '58
The Late Jimmie Icardo
The Late Honorable Larry Kleier '51
The Late Rev. Msgr. Patrick Leddy
The Late Sam Tobias

2009 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Late Bob Carroll
The Late John Etcheverry '53
The Late John Kovacevich
Mrs. Deborah Cerri Leary '67
Mr. Patrick Lencioni '83
The Late Deanna Maraccini McCauley '55
Mrs. Kay Wall
The Late Honorable Art Wallace '56

2010 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Honorable Gary Friedman '61
Mrs. Joan Garibaldi
The Late Justin Meyer '56
The Late Mary Pogon
Dr. Ken Ruettggers '80
The Late Mr. Paul Summers '53
The Late Rev. Msgr. Ronald Swett
Dr. Richard Tucker

2011 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. Don Border '50
Mrs. Joanne (Molinaro) Border '58
Sister Sharon Casey OP
Mrs. Katherine (Padilla) Cornejo '55
The Late Honorable Louis Etcheverry '58
Mr. Mike McCaffrey '64
The Late Tom Soliz '65
Mrs. Marianne (Werdel) Witmeyer '85

2012 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Late Gene Garibaldi
Mr. Dan Giordano '66
Mr. Joe Ziemann

2013 Hall of Honor Inductees

Ms. Marianne Laxague '58
Mr. Gary Ogilvie '55
The Late Dr. John Ritter

2014 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Late Stan Antongiovanni '61
The Late Dr. Romain Clerou
The Late Pat Franey
Mr. Tom Werdel '53

2015 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. Al Sandrini '57
Mr. Bill Rector '78
Mr. Darrell Feliz '70
Mr. Gino Valpredo '88
The Late Mr. Greg Robinson '70
Mr. Jim Sakowski '70

2016 Hall of Honor Inductees

The Late Charles Anspach '53
Rev. Msgr. Michael Braun
The Late Mrs. Mayie Maitia

2017 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. Tom Anchordoquy '65
Mr. Arnold Cattani '64
The Late Yolanda (Papasergia) Griffiths '51
The Late Frank Maitia Jr. '60

2018 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. John Fanucchi '68
Mr. Joe Munoz '54
The Late Mr. John Roberts '70
The Late Mr. Leroy Sacchini

Legacy Families

2019 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. Gene Bonas '57
The Late Greg Boylan '70
Mr. Tom Franconi '52
Mr. Bernie LeBeau
Mr. Ken Peters '50

2021 Hall of Honor Inductees

Mr. Mark Brown
Mr. Vince Fanucchi
Mrs. Donna James
Mr. Kevin Pascoe
Mr. Gordon Westhoff

2022 Hall of Honor Inductees

Dr. Tom Berry
Mrs. Joan (Haller) Finch '87
Me. Ed Hearn
Mrs. Jenny (Maitia) Poncetta '70



*Thank you to the
Garces FFA Program and
their advisor,
Mrs. Ashleigh Rossi,
for the lovely floral
centerpieces on our
tables tonight.*

The 2008 President's Award

The Luigi Antongiovanni Family

The 2009 President's Award

The Louis & Lucie Clerou Family

The 2010 President's Award

The Ben & Catherine Sill Family

The 2011 President's Award

The Robert & Audrey McDermott Family

The 2012 President's Award

*The Alice Jett Conley and
Vince & Marie Sakowski Family*

The 2014 President's Award

The Jim & BeBe Burke Family

The 2015 President's Award

The Joe & Jana Campbell Family

The 2016 Alumni Award

The Tom & Judy Franconi Family

The 2017 Alumni Award

The Mac & Stella McMurtrey Family

The 2018 Alumni Award

*The Shirley & Larry Gargan and
Barbara & Joe Harrison Families*

The 2019 Alumni Award

The Mary & David Fanucchi Family

The 2021 Alumni Award

The Jan & Tim Sullivan Family

The 2022 Alumni Award

The Kari & Steve Anderson Family

Garces Memorial Alma Mater

All hail to thee, dear Garces
For united we will stand
We always will be loyal
To our brave and mighty Rams!

Our prayers are always for you,
And with guidance from above
Though we win or lose we're with you
For it's Garces High we love!

Garces Memorial High School Mission Statement



Garces Memorial High School is a Catholic, coeducational, college preparatory high school. Our school educates youth to fulfill the mission of Christ by developing students spiritually, academically, and socially.

Our mission commits us to instill in every member of the Garces Memorial community the courage to act with faith, knowledge, compassion, & justice.