

# Alumni and Friends

St. Cecelia Interparochial Catholic School

An IB World School Grades PK3 through 8th Grade



January 2023



## CATCHING UP WITH ALUMNUS DAVID SIRACUSA CLASS OF 1985

David retired early at age 51 from owning two successful insurance companies in order to pursue his dreams of acting and screen writing. He recently wrote the movie *The Uncivil War—America Divided*, which begins principal production on October 17th right here in Clearwater.

### What inspired you to pursue a career in producing and acting?

Actually, it's kind of funny. I retired from owning my insurance companies and my wife, Fran (Veystrk) Siracusa, looked at me and said, "You're not just going to sit around all day not doing anything, right?" So, I thought about it for a bit and wondered what sounded like the most "fun" job out there. Writing and acting seemed like the perfect job that I could enjoy without having to pressure myself much.

### What does an average work day look like for you?

For a while, it looked great! I would wake up and go exercise, play basketball, and work out at Rock Solid Fitness, Orangetheory or a boot camp. Then I would sit on my back porch relaxing as I looked through the casting sites, looking for acting jobs to apply for. Then I would either work on preparing for my upcoming roles or perhaps look for clothes for potential wardrobe needs. But then I blew it. I decided to produce one of my own movies. Now, I'm actually busy. *The Uncivil War – America Divided* takes a lot of my time. I am acting as executive producer, producer, actor and writer on this film. Therefore, I am working on attracting and hiring talent, acquiring contracts for my actors, securing locations, promoting the film, and more! It has become a 24/7 job all of a sudden. I have future movies that I have written in my pipeline, but I may take a short vacation after this movie is completed.

### What is the best part of your job?

My favorite part is without a doubt when the director yells for quiet on the set! The tingle that I feel right before the action begins is difficult to explain. It's like right before the tip off of a big game. Your competitive nerves are stretched tight, and your desire to nail the scene is at its breaking point. You feel nervous and excited at the same time. It's an incredible experience!

### What is your proudest work related achievement to date?

I was in a music video with Carlos Vives and Camilo. They are two huge stars in the Latino world that are not as well known in the states, although Carlos Vives gained a lot of notoriety stateside recently when he released "Columbia, Mi Encanto" for the movie Encanto. His music video that I was a part of, Baloncito Viejo, has received over 14 million views on YouTube since it was released 6 months ago. I was the bald headed goal keeper extraordinaire. I have been in a number of small movies as well that I am very proud of, but I am quite certain that producing my own movie, starring some amazing Hollywood actors like Jeremy London (*Mallrats*, *Gods and Generals*), Corin Nemec (*Stargate SG-1*, *Parker Lewis Can't Lose*, *Beverly Hills, 90210*), Musetta Vander (*Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?*), Christiana Leucas (*The Last Stand*), Tanya Christiansen and more will absolutely be my most exciting moment yet in my very short career.



St. Cecelia Interparochial Catholic School  
1350 Court St. Clearwater • (727) 461-1207 • [www.st-cecelia.org](http://www.st-cecelia.org)  
Have news to share? Let us know at [rlenhardt@st-cecelia.org](mailto:rlenhardt@st-cecelia.org)

*"Celebrate the uniqueness of each person as a child of God while we proclaim the Gospel message, pray together, build community, and serve others..."*

## Alumni Awards, Honors & News

### SIRACUSA CONT.

#### How did St. Cecelia prepare you for this new endeavor?

St. Cecelia prepared me for every endeavor I have ever been a part of. I love the school. I have so many great memories of wonderful classmates and incredible teachers. The foundation of Catholic values instilled into us while we were there served me extremely well throughout my entire life. I am eternally grateful to my parents for sacrificing in order to make sure that my brothers and I could get an amazing private, Catholic education second to none.

#### What is your fondest memory of SCS?

I was always an athlete at heart. Playing for the basketball team at St. Cecelia was the biggest thing that I looked forward to every year. Making my parents, my friends and my school proud of me for helping them to win on the court always meant a lot to me. When you're young and in school, there aren't too many things you can do to show your appreciation for those around you who care for you the most. You can behave to the best of your ability, you can make good grades, you can be a friend to as many people as you can, and you can accomplish things that will make you and those around you proud. I always felt playing sports was a big part of who I was. I loved playing hard and comporting myself in a manner that would bring honor to my parents and to my community. And I hope that was the impression that I left on the community there.

#### Do you have any advice for current St. Cecelia students?

Believe in what St. Cecelia is trying to instill in you. They are trying their best to make you the most incredible person you can possibly be. They want to see you succeed in every way you can, but you have to be a part of that success. You have to work on the skills that they are giving you. You have an amazing opportunity and a leg up on many other students your age just by the sheer fact that you are at an institution which cares so deeply about making you the best. Don't squander the amazing opportunity that your parents and loved ones have struggled so hard to provide you.

#### What was your favorite SCS tradition?

Lining up on the black top. I loved hearing the announcements while we stood in line together as an entire school. I loved



David  
Siracusa  
"Dave"  
"I love girls!"  
Soccer  
Tennis  
Volleyball  
Basketball  
Baseball

saying the pledge and the prayers. I loved being part of a Catholic school and a Catholic community!

#### Favorite class?

I was always a history nut. This is probably why I ended up teaching history for seven years at Tampa Catholic High School. History and storytelling has always fascinated me.

#### Teacher?

Mrs. Bertrand and Mrs. Brown. I couldn't even tell you why, but they just always stood out as my favorite teachers. They must have made class both fun and educational for me at the same time. But for whatever reason, they have always stood out.



### CLAYTON SPILMAN '10

Clayton Spilman (St. Cecelia class of 2010) graduated in May from The University of Florida College of Dentistry. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, he will be the third generation of Spilman dentists. Clayton and his father, Jeff Spilman, practice in St. Petersburg, FL at their private office, Spilman Dentistry. Clayton credits his first introduction to his love of science to his third grade teacher, Mrs Kunnen.



### WILL SPELMAN '12

Alumnus Will Spelman was sworn in earlier this year to the Clearwater Police Department. Since he was five years old, Will has dreamed of following in the footsteps of his mother, Lt. Laura Spelman. Congratulations, Will!



*"Encourage students to open their hearts to God, their minds to learning, and their talents to service..."*

## Alumni Awards, Honors & News



### ALUMNUS CONOR O'BRIEN '11 NAMED CO-WINNER OF JOE CONCANNON AWARD

Endicott men's ice hockey senior goaltender Conor O'Brien has been selected as the co-winner of the 21st Joe Concannon Award, presented annually to the best American-born NCAA Division II/III college hockey student-athlete in New England.

The Joe Concannon Award was established in 2001 shortly after the passing of the longtime writer for *The Boston Globe* who had a great passion for the game of college hockey while always advocating strongly for amateur athletics.

O'Brien is the first student-athlete in Endicott men's ice hockey program history to receive the award. Additionally, he is only the third goalie ever to win the Joe Concannon Award.

"From day one, Conor has made our program and community a better place," said Endicott men's ice hockey head coach R.J. Tolan. "He's the most self-confident and competitive person I have coached. He is so committed to his craft, and he has made it almost impossible not to play him in every game, not only over the last season, but for his entire career here at Endicott. Conor always raises the bar and wills himself to be the very best goaltender, captain, and teammate. He has been the backbone of our team, has been a great leader, and has been a huge contributor to our success as a program."

O'Brien currently ranks No. 1 in Division III in save percentage, No. 2 in GAA, and No. 15 in goalie winning percentage (.750).

For his efforts this season, O'Brien became the first goaltender in CCC men's ice hockey history to receive conference Player of the Year and Goaltender of the Year accolades, respectively. The Goaltender of the Year award marked his second career honor, while his All-CCC First Team selection also was a second-time achievement for his storied career.

Congratulations to Conor!

Alumnus Gregory Limardi, II class 2012 is currently in term two at St. George University. On Saturday September 10, 2022, he received his white coat.

The white coat ceremony is a rite of passage for medical students and was created by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation in 1993. During the ceremony, a white coat is placed on each student's shoulders and often the Hippocratic oath is recited, signifying their entrance into the medical profession. Often seen as a symbol of authority and professionalism, SGU was one of the first medical schools to honor this tradition.



### NEW BABY

Joette Amundaray Miller and Eric Miller from the SCS c/o 2007 welcomed their new son, Patrick Jose, on September 11, 2022.



*"Strive to provide a strong spiritual and academic foundation so that our students can become responsible members of the Church and the community now and in the future..."*



## CALLING ALL ALUMNI

St. Cecelia Catholic School, founded in 1948, will celebrate its 75th anniversary next year, and we need your help spreading the word. We are in need of class representatives to assist in gathering e-mails and addresses of students that previously attended SCS. Events are being planned for April of 2024 and we hope to have a great turnout. Please contact [lenhardt@st-cecelia.org](mailto:lenhardt@st-cecelia.org) if interested in being a representative or helping on the committee.

On another note: Did you know that St. Cecelia School has both an Alumni Facebook page as well as a school Facebook page? Go to <https://www.facebook.com/stceceliaschool/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/78330640415>

Please LIKE us and share with other Alumni!!!



## Where are they now?



Michelle Hedrich SCS '05; CCC '09; University of Florida '14 Environmental Engineering; Working for GE Aviation, Asheville, NC; 70.3 Ironman competitor ranked in her age group nationally and internationally.

Michael Hedrich SCS '11; CCC '15; University of Florida '20 Mechanical Engineering; Working for Hercules Industries, Denver, CO

## OPEN HOUSE DATES

**February 8, 2023**

**March 15, 2023**

**8:30am - 5:30pm**

**RSVP to 727-461-1207**

## Give A Gift

to help St. Cecelia Catholic School continue its mission of providing students with an affordable Catholic education. Please consider giving a gift that makes a difference now and forever. Visit <http://www.st-cecelia.org/student-life/alumni/alumni-giving/> to donate.

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