

COVINGTON CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

CONNECT

WE ALL SHARE SOMETHING IN COMMON...
OUR COLONEL CONNECTION.



COVINGTON
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL



Our Colonel CONNECTION



The 2016 Covington Catholic High School MY PATH publication was based on the scientific definition of a pathway as “a sequence of reactions, by which one organic substance is converted to another.” We explored the paths that some CCH alumni have taken and anticipated the ones that some 2016 graduates were about to embark upon.

This year, we look at how the paths of alumni and others from our CovCath family have been influenced by connections – linkages, bridges, relationships, and bonds – and how 2017 graduates were impacted in similar ways. The CovCath mission to “embrace the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in order to educate young men spiritually, academically, physically and socially” is the primary daily pursuit, but this focus and shared experience create linkages that extend well beyond four walls and four years.

Colonels are connected through a Spirit That Will Not Die.



The brotherhood at CovCath is part of the unique difference that enables our excellence. Connecting with each other, connecting with our community, connecting with God.

Michael Maurer

Class of 2012 (Valedictorian)
Google – Software Engineer



connect with a world

Software engineers like Michael Maurer integrate computer engineering and mathematical analysis into the design and development of software and computer applications. Michael says those are the fundamentals, but that communication and community offer equally important insights to his work and general life pursuits.

He respected the well-known passion that CCH math teacher Mr. Charlie Parrott (retired in 2017) and physics teacher Mr. Charlie Hartman brought to framing a technical problem and inspiring students to dig for the logical solution. He also credits art teacher Mr. Tim Haders with helping him appreciate the humanities: both how to recognize different perspectives and how to express his own. As he progressed, he began to understand that his work was infinitely more interesting when he allowed what he learned and experienced from different disciplines to flavor it. Outside the classroom, the sophomore Wyoming retreat helped him expand his appreciation for nature as well as his gratitude for camaraderie and personal support systems.

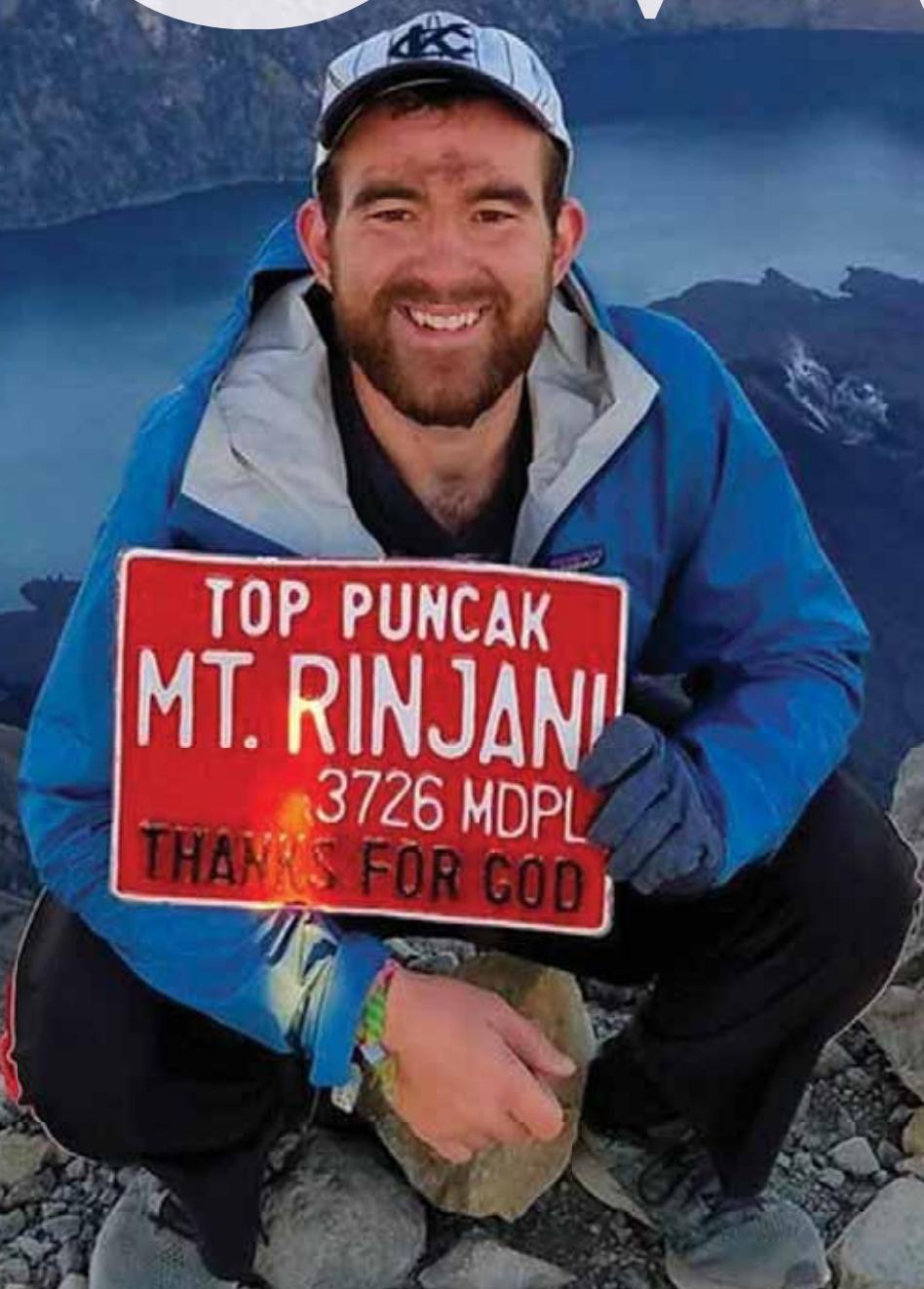
For college, Michael chose Georgia Tech for its academic excellence, but also for the community of its Honors Program and the opportunities that Atlanta could provide. He loves Google for its attention to leading edge technology, equaled by its culture of camaraderie and collaboration, within the vibrancy of New York City. Prior to starting full time at Google, he took a “world tour” – Indonesia and South-east Asia, Africa, New Zealand and the western United States – traveling much of it by himself. “It gave me a whole new level of openness to how much people have in common.”

Michael says that by far the biggest lessons for him have come through service. His work mentoring young students in Covington under Mr. Bill Snyder while at CovCath grew into future volunteer roles with an even greater impact - teaching robotics, 3D printing and laser cutting in under-performing schools in Atlanta and NYC. He has witnessed how education is “the great equalizer” for those kids, connecting them to the world that also expands for him each day.



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view.





Chris Crush

Class of 2007
U.S. Navy
Naval Flight Officer

connect with a
purpose



Chris Crush is a Naval Flight Officer and Mission Commander for the P3-C Orion, with two completed deployments (Japan/Thailand and Bahrain/Qatar/Turkey). He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics.

He was a four year art student at CovCath, with involvement in the Photography and Art Clubs, as well as Cross Country and Lacrosse. He had not considered USNA until it was suggested to him by a peer at the Kentucky Governor's Scholars program who dreamed of flying jets.

Looking back, his decision to attend the Naval Academy, his success at completing the rigorous 47-month academic, physical and military leadership training path to commissioning as an Officer, and the satisfaction with his intense and challenging role as a squadron leader in missions around the world can all be linked to his experiences at CovCath. He credits a long list of CCH teachers who challenged him "in ways beyond academics, to reflect on the person I was and who I wanted to be, pushing me out of my comfort zone." His service selection of Naval Aviation, his enjoyment of the cultural exposure during deployments, and his overall pride in being a military officer all trace back to an affinity for the familial and inspirational culture learned at CCH. "We [CovCath students] were taught to be a part of something bigger."

His brother Kevin (CCH 2010) followed Chris to the Academy, graduating in 2015. Kevin is now a Supply Officer on the USS Dallas (a fast-attack submarine).

Chris's connection to friends from CovCath remains tight; many have even visited him when stationed far away from Northern Kentucky.

Photo: Chris operated a P-3C Orion during his deployments with Patrol Squadron 46 (VP-46) as a tactical coordinator and mission commander, with primary roles of anti-submarine warfare and reconnaissance.



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connect with a
commitment to
excellence



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Michael T. Rohmiller, MD

Class of 1990

Beacon Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine
Surgeon

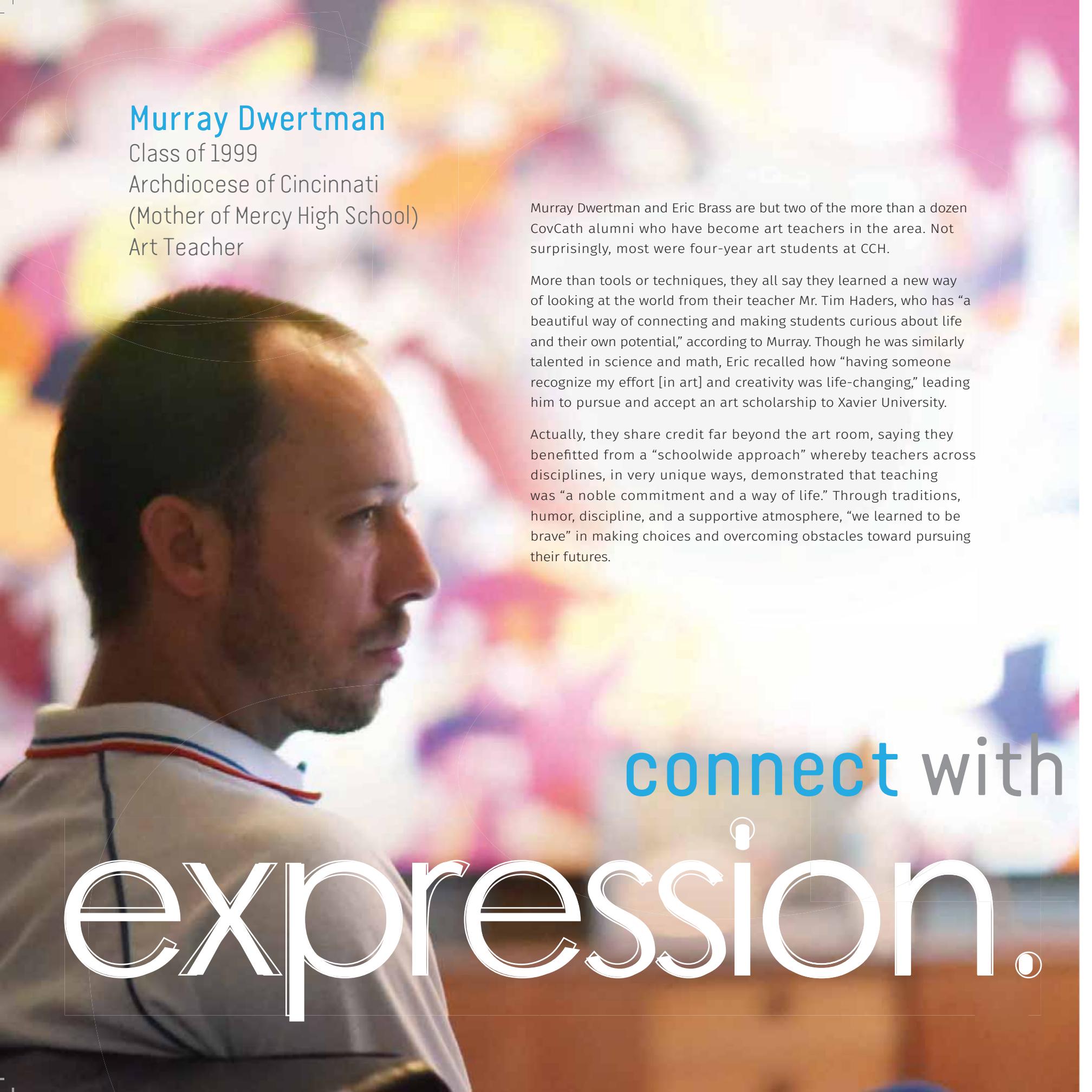
As a past catcher for CCH varsity baseball, Orthopaedic Spine Surgeon and Cincinnati Magazine “Top Doctor” Michael Rohmiller is a member of a very noteworthy “All-Star” team. There are Colonel alumni from every position on the baseball field who became doctors (MD, DMD, PhD).

Michael was amused but not surprised by that outcome, remembering at least a handful of his teammates who became medical professionals, including his partner at Beacon Orthopaedics, Dr. Justin Kruer (also Class of 1990). He said that, whether it was from being a part of a team, as he was, or as a student within the overall CovCath community, one learned two things: “that we were a part of something bigger, and that hard work pays off.”

That community was characterized by teachers who role modeled caring for others by their investment in students’ needs and success. “*I can’t wasn’t an acceptable answer*” but “we also never felt alone. We were challenged – and enabled - to find a way to accomplish our goals both on and off the field.”

As illustration, Michael recalls how he and his fellow seniors on the baseball team pointed out to Coach Krumpelbeck that every opponent had learned CovCath’s hand signals after years of the same ones being used. Coach Krumps readily acknowledged they were right, but said it didn’t matter; if the players executed properly, they would earn the victory. “We got the message.”

That community – and his commitment to it – is a routine part of Dr. Rohmiller’s professional life today, as he interacts with CCH connections (students, athletes, parents, alumni, and administration) on an almost daily basis. “Every time that I treat a member of the extended Covington Catholic family, I am honored and humbled that they chose me to provide spine care. Patients typically recognize the serious nature of spine surgery, so it is the ultimate compliment to receive that level of trust”.



Murray Dwertman

Class of 1999

Archdiocese of Cincinnati

(Mother of Mercy High School)

Art Teacher

Murray Dwertman and Eric Brass are but two of the more than a dozen CovCath alumni who have become art teachers in the area. Not surprisingly, most were four-year art students at CCH.

More than tools or techniques, they all say they learned a new way of looking at the world from their teacher Mr. Tim Haders, who has “a beautiful way of connecting and making students curious about life and their own potential,” according to Murray. Though he was similarly talented in science and math, Eric recalled how “having someone recognize my effort [in art] and creativity was life-changing,” leading him to pursue and accept an art scholarship to Xavier University.

Actually, they share credit far beyond the art room, saying they benefitted from a “schoolwide approach” whereby teachers across disciplines, in very unique ways, demonstrated that teaching was “a noble commitment and a way of life.” Through traditions, humor, discipline, and a supportive atmosphere, “we learned to be brave” in making choices and overcoming obstacles toward pursuing their futures.

connect with
expression.

Beyond teaching art in high schools, Eric and Murray have been involved in the creation of multi-school art shows aimed at connecting Catholic high school teachers and art programs across the region, and providing students with real-world exhibition opportunities and tuition grant awards. Eric has created an Art Club at St. Xavier High School, exposing students to Cincinnati's vibrant arts scene and professional art careers. No doubt, these opportunities create connections for their students who pursue art, as well as the ones who don't.

Eric Brass

Class of 1997
Archdiocese of Cincinnati
(St. Xavier High School)
Art Teacher

confident

Pictured right: Eric produced, donated and then purchased this piece for an art show fundraising benefit held by former students of Mr. Haders in 2015.



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Bob Hoffer

Dressman Benzinger LaVelle - Attorney
Parent of CCH Alumni Eric (2001),
Kevin (2004), and Jordan (2011)

Though he's not himself a Covington Catholic alumnus, Bob Hoffer officially became an honorary Colonel when he was selected as the 2012 Northern Kentuckian of the Year. In many ways, his involvement at CovCath exemplifies the connections that build among members of the extended Colonel family in a collective pursuit of the school's mission.

Like many CCH parents, Bob became highly involved when his three sons attended CovCath. With past experience in Cruscillo, a Diocese of Covington adult retreat program, CCH teacher Mr. Al Hertsenberg invited him to join the CovCath Christian Awakening team in 2001. Bob has continued this role almost every year since, even leading the entire effort in 2013-14. What brought him back, and others he's recruited to the process, including his sons and his daughter, is the growth that is witnessed in the seniors to recognize that "the world's not just about me". Bob says the students get a powerful lesson that "we are all in this together and can rely on one another when we are challenged."

This type of message helped connect Bob and his wife Diane with other Colonel families, even when just having casual conversation in the stands at baseball games. Some of those parents, such as the Fagels, the Seversons, and many others, joined Bob in the Christian Awakening process as well as other service experiences outside of CovCath. One of those is an annual mission trip to Jamaica, helping provide housing and care facilities to disabled adults. Started by Chris Benzinger (CCH 1988), the number of groups and trips has expanded each year, as many CovCath parents and sons have joined the effort. What's the common thread? According to Bob, it's the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life, and to share that experience with equally passionate and committed friends.





Connect with
community.



The first ever Brian and Kenny Williams Scholarship recipient, Sean Gruber has been a valued member on many teams, but identifies his driving philosophy as “men and women for others” - the mantra of his college alma mater. Without realizing it at the time, the foundation of that philosophy was built during his time at CovCath.

A talented baseball and football player at CovCath who went on to lead the College of the Holy Cross football team in multiple stats, he valued CovCath coaches and teachers for lessons that transcended the classroom or field. Consistently, they taught him three simple principles to live by – Faith; Passion for the task at hand; and Selflessness. He has also stayed close to many Colonel brothers, sharing an intrinsic spirit to a degree that his coworkers and former teammates notice as unique. He strives to replicate that commitment and connection in his roles as an athlete, a mentor, a business leader and, now this year, a father.

He has had team experiences with great individual performances, but learned that the team didn't meet its full potential unless all units came together as one. As a manager at companies like GE and now Nike, he sees that people who are happy, passionate and motivated are more critical to success than any technical development or mathematical spreadsheet analysis. At Nike, his group relies on relationships with people in product development, inventory planning and sales to make the right upstream decisions on apparel assortments that will result in commercial success in the marketplace.

And then there's Mary Gruber, Sean's mom (also mom to Brian, CCH 1998). Even with a full time job, Mrs. Gruber has made “Gruber-burgers” a sought-after staple of the baseball concession stand for fifteen years. Sean explains that Mary saw how hard her sons' coaches worked and helped develop the concession business to provide some cash back to the program. “She says it's payback; that she can't thank CCH enough for what they gave her boys.” Sounds like being a “[person] for others” is exemplified in many ways in and around CovCath.

Pictured Left: Sean at Nike in Oregon.

Bottom Left Photo: Mary Gruber making her “Gruber-burgers” at a baseball game.



connect with a
team
approach.

Sean Gruber

Class of 2002

Nike, Inc.

Merchandise Manager:
NCAA Licensed Apparel

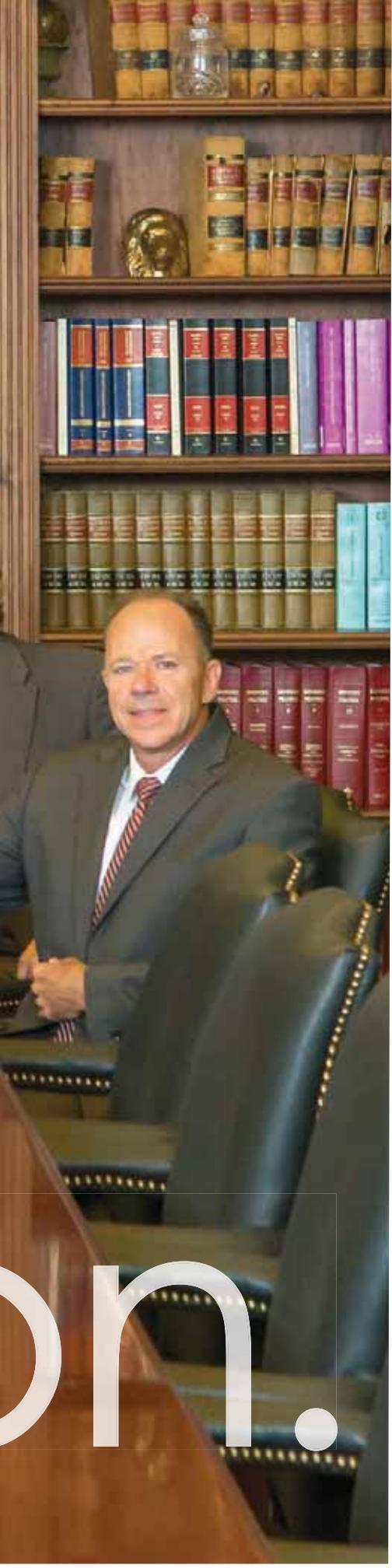
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A photograph of four men in professional attire sitting at a large, polished wooden desk in a library setting. Behind them are tall bookshelves filled with numerous books. The men are dressed in suits and ties, except for one who is wearing a blue sweater with a large white 'C' on it. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

connect with ...
professional and social

dedication



Messrs. Dusing, Sketch, Algie, Guenther, Metzger and Simendinger

Classes of 1967, 1972, 1981, 1985, 2003, and 2007
Adams, Stepner, Woltermann & Dusing, PLLC – Attorneys

Connections are an important determinant to a law firm's success. The CovCath connections at the Northern Kentucky law firm of Adams, Stepner, Woltermann & Dusing (ASWD) are exemplary of that.

Firm partner Gerry Dusing (CCH 1967), who still treasures his CCH letterman sweater, has built ASWD into a pre-eminent law firm in Kentucky by recruiting other CovCath alumni who excel in the practice of law. Michael Sketch (1972), Glenn Algie (1981), Scott Guenther (1985), Lee Metzger (2003) and Tommy Simendinger (2007) are additional Colonels currently represented at the firm. Notably, as Mr. Metzger has observed, it is not due to pure patronage but rather because "we know those with a CCH education have a solid moral foundation, are hard-working, and have been trained to think critically."

The Colonel DNA of these men transcends their different eras at CovCath and their different law specialties, but influences the approach to their practice and a commitment to community involvement as well. As a defense lawyer, Lee "seeks to see Christ in every person I encounter." Further, Mr. Dusing has always emphasized that, to be a good attorney, one must be a good person and to give back.

Many give back to CCH. Michael Sketch's leadership as President of the CovCath School Board inspired Lee Metzger to the same position. ASWD attorneys participate in the alumni golf outing, and support the annual NKYL event. Some have sons who attend(ed) CovCath, and thus have been involved as parents in school events and as fans in the athletic stands. And, the scope of their overall community leadership is broad and deep – from social service to business development to work for the Kentucky Board of Bar Examiners, with Pro Deo et Patria ("For God and Country") as the guiding principle to it all.



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Throughout these stories, the commitment of CovCath staff is a common thread that binds them all. Across all CCH departments, it is an undeniable truth that the authentic commitment of the people who have professionally and personally dedicated themselves to the CCH Mission is what cements a foundation of connection.

That commitment is illustrated by the impressive tenure and number of alumni among the CovCath staff, as shown here:



35+ years



30+ years



25+ years



Alumni

Pictured Above:

35+ years at CCH: Charlie Hartman, Bill Krumpelbeck, Bill Balskus

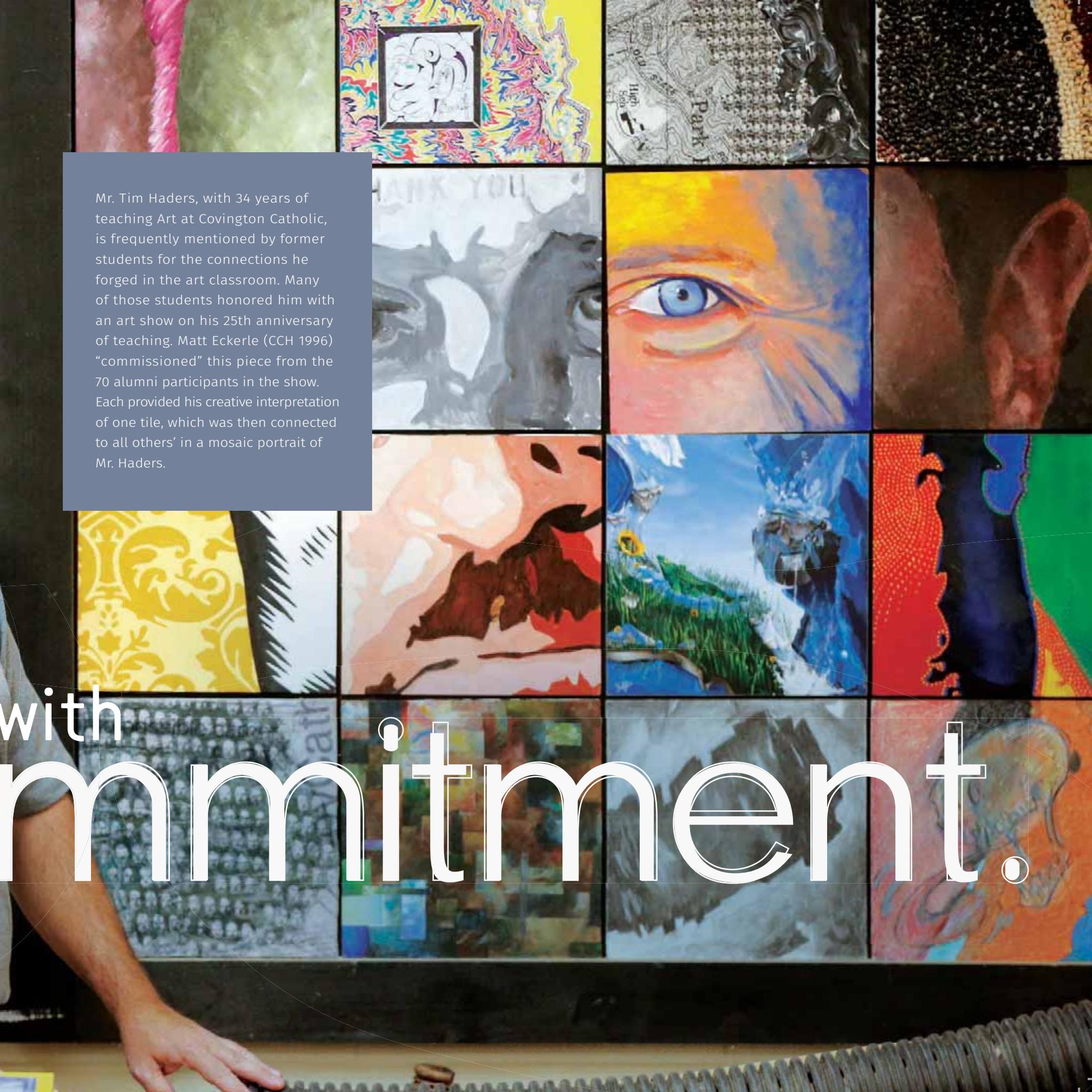
30+ years at CCH: Tim Haders, Diane Ruth, Lois Flaherty, Mike Guidugli

25+ years at CCH: Carol Rasp, Al Hertsenberg, Barb Hagedorn

(Not pictured: Marti Davey)

11 Alumni are current CCH staff members: Joshua McCoy, Joseph Gastenveld, Alex Ammerman, Nick Hovan, Rick Flesch, Tom Eckerle, Bill Snyder, Tom Arnold, Tony Barczak, Craig Cleveland (Not pictured: Jake Kleier)





Mr. Tim Haders, with 34 years of teaching Art at Covington Catholic, is frequently mentioned by former students for the connections he forged in the art classroom. Many of those students honored him with an art show on his 25th anniversary of teaching. Matt Eckerle (CCH 1996) "commissioned" this piece from the 70 alumni participants in the show. Each provided his creative interpretation of one tile, which was then connected to all others' in a mosaic portrait of Mr. Haders.

with
commitment.



Matthew Franxman

Matthew insists that his dad, grandfather, and great-grandfather would have supported his choice of any high school, but the merits of attending CovCath compelled him to become a fourth generation Colonel in this family. He grew spiritually as a member of the Diocese Youth Evangelization Team and by completing over 100 hours of community service, socially within the “fun” atmosphere and extracurriculars like intramural bowling and robotics, and succeeded academically as Captain of (an undefeated) Quick Recall Team, the winner of the Ben Kossenjans Computer Science Award, and as the Class of 2017 Salutatorian. He is attending the University of Louisville, Speed School of Engineering, with the Trustee Scholarship, to study Computer Science or Chemical Engineering.

Logan Franxman

Logan focused on science and math at CovCath, especially Calculus, Physics, and Engineering. He pushed himself hard in Cross Country and Track, and expanded his horizons via selections to a multitude of selective regional/national extracurricular programs, spending ten straight weeks away the summer before senior year at the Kentucky Governor’s Scholars Program, the American Legion’s Boys Nation, and immersive programs at the U.S. Military Academy (West Point) and U.S. Naval Academy (USNA). A CCH Ambassador, a founding member of the CCH Corps of Cadets, and a 2nd Lieutenant and Ranger/Medic 1st Class in the Civil Air Patrol, this CCH Principal’s Award winner is attending USNA to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree prior to commissioning as an officer in the Navy or Marines.



Ryan Eckerle

Ryan loves to compete athletically, as a four-year member of the baseball team and a passionate player in the Intramural Basketball League (IBL). He liked the fun environment of a winning team, always feeling that the Colonels’ Baseball team was “the one to beat” in the region. Unfortunately, two surgeries in two years sidelined his game...but only temporarily. With motivation from those experiences, and knowledge obtained in Biology and Anatomy classes at CCH (where he was given “room to explore”), he is attending the University of Cincinnati with the Cincinnati Scholarship and guaranteed admission to the Physical Therapy doctorate program so he can help others stay active and “in the game”.



Griffin Lamb

Griffin's favorite memory from CovCath was scoring two goals in the State Championship Soccer Final, helping bring the first-ever state title to a Northern Kentucky team (and earning this team captain multiple accolades such as All-State and Cincinnati/NKY Player of the Year). While he will play soccer in college at Transylvania University (with multiple scholarships), he will study English/Pre-Law and Photography, reflecting what he experienced at the Governor's School for the Arts ("diversity bridged by our art"), as a CCH Ambassador and representative to the Regional Youth Leadership program ("importance of meeting and learning from others"), and via four years of weekly service as a mentor/tutor to inner city elementary students. Similarly, Griffin found that his CCH friends might have different interests, but "we still found ways to be connected."

Harrison Sommerkamp

Harrison learned the value of relationships: amongst his CovCath brothers during the Wyoming retreat as a sophomore; and amongst people in another country when he went on the Nicaragua Mission Trip as a junior. Though the Nicaraguan people there generally distrusted strangers, their perspective completely changed when they experienced the Colonels' commitment to helping them. He learned something new, when he tried pole-vaulting as a freshman, eventually clearing 12'. Harrison is attending the University of Arizona (with a College of Engineering Scholarship), where he knew only one person before arrival, but is confident that what he learned about community from CCH teachers and retreat experiences ("you are not alone") will be the key to his happiness and success there.



**OUR 2017 GRADUATES ARE READY TO CONNECT
THEIR CCH EXPERIENCE TO THEIR COLLEGE
LIVES AND BEYOND.**



Alex Shelton

As the senior leader of last year's Freshman Day of Reflection retreat, Alex was intent on finding guys to speak who could set the tone for a theme of connectedness. He says that football, especially in his role as a team captain, was a foundation for learning and imparting life lessons. Some of that leadership no doubt carried over in his roles as President of Magnified Giving, President of the Spirit Club, Recipient of the 2017 Brian and Kenny Williams Scholarship, and 2017 Colonel of the Year. With "best memories" including senior year wins over two local football rivals, Alex will continue to lead on the football field, playing for the Eastern Kentucky University Colonels (also receiving the EKU Presidential Scholarship), and likely coaching someday.

Kyle Crail

Kyle was destined to attend CovCath, but his experience turned out differently (and even better) than he might have imagined due to new opportunities he discovered there. One of those was Mock Trial, a new club introduced at CCH during Kyle's junior year. With guidance, coaching and encouragement from hugely accomplished attorneys, in just its second year of competition, CovCath's team placed third in the state, and Kyle was named Most Outstanding Attorney. With multiple scholarships to the University of Dayton based on merit, service leadership, and commitment to Catholic education, he will study Accounting and later attend law school.



World View, Purpose, Excellence, Expression, Community, Team Approach, Professional and Social Dedication, and Commitment.



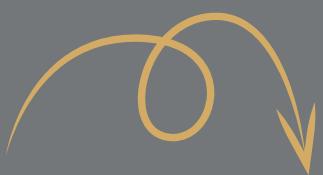
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CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER.
CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY.
CONNECTING WITH GOD.