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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**NEW**  
Power Hour Series  
[www.stjohns.edu/powerhour](http://www.stjohns.edu/powerhour)

St. John's University Alumni Book Club  
[www.stjohns.edu/bookclub](http://www.stjohns.edu/bookclub)

For information on the Men's Basketball  
pregame 1870 Court Red Storm Tailgates  
and additional details and events, visit  
[www.stjohns.edu/alumnievent](http://www.stjohns.edu/alumnievent)

Queens Winter Carnival  
Monday, December 5  
Great Lawn, Queens Campus

Staten Island Christmas Tree Lighting  
Monday, December 5  
Great Lawn, Staten Island Campus

Lessons and Carols  
Saturday, December 10  
St. Thomas More Church, Queens Campus  
[www.stjohns.edu/lessonsandcarols](http://www.stjohns.edu/lessonsandcarols)

Power Hour Series: Meet Your Match  
with the Pickleball Johnnies  
Tuesday, January 10  
\*details to come

**ANDREW J. BARTILUCCI, PH.D. '44P, '98HON  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**



**ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY**



Andrew J. Bartilucci, Ph.D. '44P, '98HON, Dean and Executive Vice President Emeritus, celebrates his 100th birthday this month! In honor of this milestone and his service to alma mater, please consider supporting the Andrew J. Bartilucci, Ph.D. '44P, '98HON Scholarship Fund today. Your gift provides scholarships to our deserving students. To donate, please contact Susan M. Damiani '87CBA, Director of Gift Planning, at 718-990-7562.



Andrew J. Bartilucci, Ph.D. '44P, '98HON embodies the true mission of St. John's University. An alumnus of the College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions and a beloved St. John's faculty member and administrator, his accolades go beyond that of just leadership, wisdom, and intellectual intelligence. For so many decades, this beloved and gentle man has been an inspiring role model for thousands of students, faculty members, and colleagues at the University.

"St. John's has been an absolutely wonderful part of my life for so long," he said. "It is impossible for me to imagine what my life, both personally and professionally, would have been like without my association with this fantastic University. It has been so much more than just a second family to me—in so many ways, it's been my very existence."

Like St. Vincent de Paul, Dr. Bartilucci was drawn to the healing professions. He earned a baccalaureate degree in Pharmacy at St. John's in 1944 and shortly thereafter went on to earn a master of science degree and doctorate. After serving in the Navy and entering the workforce, he returned to his alma mater as a faculty member and Dean of the College of Pharmacy, ultimately leading the school into national prominence.

His deanship concluded in 1988 when he assumed a new administrative role as Vice President for Health Professions, Clinical Services and Research, and Acting Dean of St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In 1991, he was appointed by then-President Rev. Donald J. Harrington, C.M., as the University's Executive Vice President.

"Serving St. John's in various capacities has always been a genuine honor for me," he said. "This wonderful University has always been a very special place, and it has done so much for so many people, myself included. As a pharmacist, I have always believed that offering a hand to those in need is a noble obligation—and that is what St. John's has always been about. My own philosophy is completely in sync with the Vincentian mission of caring and concern for others. My membership in the University family has enriched my life beyond words, and I humbly hope that I have been able to advance that mission into the world."

The Dr. Andrew J. Bartilucci Center was named for him in recognition of his love, dedication, and commitment to St. John's. His commitment has brought St. John's into the lives of many, including his three daughters and son-in-law.

"As I look back upon my time at St. John's, I realize how blessed I have been to both witness and share in the unprecedented achievements of the University I love. As I look into the future, I can only marvel at the unlimited potential for both goodness and greatness that surely lies ahead."

Ad multos annos, Dr. Bartilucci!

**MESSAGE FROM  
SUSAN M. DAMIANI '87CBA**

Director of Gift Planning/The McCallen Society



Hello, Retirees Association members!

Thank you for joining us at the annual Retirees Association Luncheon on Tuesday, November 15. I hope you enjoyed gathering with your fellow retirees while hearing about the most recent developments at the University from Simon G. Møller, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

I hope you enjoyed meeting our guest speakers, Judith L. Beizer, Pharm.D., Clinical Professor at St. John's College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and Anne Ricci, President of Ricci Insurance Services Inc. They discussed Medicare Part D and Gap Plans in great detail. Please contact Dr. Beizer or Ms. Ricci if you would like further clarifications on your current plan, or if you need help finding what is best for your needs. You should have received an email with their contact details.

Thank you for your service and dedication to St. John's University. Please continue to share your St. John's memories, post photos, and reminisce about the wonderful times spent here on the Retirees Association Facebook page. Even though you are retired, you are still a big part of what makes this institution so great. Membership in the St. John's family is forever! Please stay in touch, drop me a line, post on Facebook, or join us at a Power Hour or at one of the other events listed on the back of this newsletter.

Wishing you and your family a joyous, peaceful, and happy Thanksgiving.

## OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

### Looking Forward to Brighter Times

By Simon G. Møller, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University Distinguished Professor, and Provost Endowed Chair



As we continue through the current academic year, the excitement on campus has been most certainly noticeable. The dedication, hard work, and resilience exhibited by the entire St. John's community to ensure that we resume normal operations is simply incredible. I wish to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to everyone for their commitment to our great University. The following are several new developments and initiatives underway at St. John's that I am pleased to share with our retirees.

During the last academic year, the Strategic Planning Committee produced a draft of a five-year Strategic Plan for St. John's University. The plan was developed with broad participation across campus. It is ambitious but realistic, has our students as the focal point, and will move our great University forward as we face new challenges and attempt to turn them into opportunities.

Student recruitment and enrollment remain a focus in a challenging marketplace. This year we have further optimized our enrollment strategy by providing an even more engaging experience for students and their families during their decision-making process.

Amongst numerous initiatives, we implemented a Parent and Family University where family members were invited to virtually engage with University students, faculty, alumni, administrators, staff, and current parents during the spring and summer to learn about and discuss a range of important topics. Also new this year was Summer at St. John's: Explore and More, where incoming students and their families had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the University, both academically and socially, on campus and at cultural and professional off-campus locations. Both these events were aimed at fostering a sense of belonging and information sharing.

We have a diverse and enthusiastic first-year class this year—a group of more than 2,900 students representing 38 countries—and we are excited to see them succeed at St. John's.

## The Legacy of Frank Coppa, Ph.D., Continues to Inspire Others at St. John's

By Thomas Burke '68C, Contributor



For more than five decades, thousands of St. John's University students, both undergraduate and graduate, walked through the doors of history under the gifted leadership and caring mentorship of Frank Coppa, Ph.D. Widely acknowledged as a giant in his field, Dr. Coppa left a lasting impact on the University he loved, both in the classroom and administratively. On more than one occasion he served as Chairperson of the History Department, and he was instrumental in developing and implementing St. John's doctoral program in World History.

"My father believed that history was not something dusty that sat in a book, but rather something that needed to be both appreciated and used," said his daughter, Francesca Coppa. "He knew that history was not just about events, but about people, and how they interacted with the things that were taking place around them. He believed that if people weren't aware of what happened yesterday, they wouldn't be able to appreciate what's happening today."

The year after Dr. Coppa passed away in 2021, he was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus, a striking testament to the esteem in which he was held by St. John's.

Fittingly, the Coppa family has established a scholarship to ensure that his memory will remain alive forever through the young people who might one day follow in his footsteps. The scholarship is

This year we received approval for our new Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program and the first nursing cohort began in August. The nursing program will be housed in the new 70,000-square-foot St. Vincent Health Sciences Center, which is scheduled to open its doors in the Fall of 2024. St. Vincent Hall was demolished in the spring and the construction phase of the new building is underway.

The core curriculum represents the cornerstone of all undergraduate programs at St. John's. After many years of hard work by the University Core Curriculum Council, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved a new, 39-credit University core curriculum for undergraduate students, which will be implemented in Fall 2023. The new University Core Curriculum will remain dynamic and will evolve over time in line with the needs of our students.

This summer we welcomed three new academic Deans to St. John's. James D. Wolfinger, Ph.D., started his tenure as Dean of The School of Education; Teresa Delgado, Ph.D., started her tenure as Dean of St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; and in September we welcomed Anne Y. F. Lin '84P, '86Pharm.D., FNAP, as the new Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. They all bring an extensive track record of outstanding leadership skills to our institution and we are excited to call them our colleagues.

In July, Rachel Pereira, Ed.D., Esq., was appointed Vice President for Equity and Inclusion in the Office of the President. She will oversee new initiatives and executive projects that advance, coordinate, and enhance institutional efforts to promote strategic priorities and advance policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism. We are excited to work with Dr. Pereira as we continue our commitment to affirming the dignity and humanity of all persons—prioritizing social justice, diversity, belonging, equity, and inclusion.

This year has been extraordinarily exciting. We have come a long way, but our work has just begun.

designed to offer financial assistance to deserving students who are committed to the study of history on either the undergraduate or graduate level.

"My dad really cared about the study of history," noted Ms. Coppa. "In fact, he trained many of the teachers of history in high schools throughout the city. When he passed away, there was a tremendous outpouring of sympathy and respect from those teachers. Given that reality, our family agreed that the best thing that we could do was establish a scholarship to maintain the things that he cared about. The Coppa family will do all that we can to support the History Department at St. John's."

In addition to his work at the University, Dr. Coppa was a historian of modern Europe, and was especially devoted to the history of the papacy. He was very interested in how the Church responded to the Second World War and the Holocaust. During his later life he did a lot of Judeo-Christian reconciliation work, working to bridge the gap between them.

A fervent believer in the Vincentian values that lie at the heart of the St. John's experience, Dr. Coppa incorporated those values into his life. "Making a difference for others was important to him, both personally and professionally," said Ms. Coppa. "He had tremendous respect for his students, and he really enjoyed interacting with his colleagues in the department. He loved the University to the very essence of his being, and it's wonderful to know that he was loved in return."

## ST. JOHN'S OFFICE OF GIFT PLANNING/ MCCALLEN SOCIETY

### America's Fastest-Growing Sport a Hit with St. John's Alumni

By Andrew Miller, Editorial Director, Marketing and Communications



Created in 1965 to alleviate boredom during a family vacation, Pickleball is now the fastest-growing sport in the US. With simple rules and a shallow learning curve, it's the perfect sport for athletes and couch potatoes alike. Now, Pickleball has made its way to the tennis courts of St. John's University, where scores of alumni join together for fun, fitness, and friendship.

"I first learned about Pickleball from one of The McCallen Society members," explained Susan M. Damiani '87CBA, Director of Gift Planning and The McCallen Society. "I was planning the society's activity schedule for the year and members were telling me they wanted to move their bodies and go outdoors. It seemed like a natural fit."

Calling themselves the PBJs (short for Pickleball Johnnies), this intrepid group of nearly 30 St. John's alumni joins together each week from May through late October to play the sport which combines elements of ping-pong, tennis, and badminton. A Pickleball court is just a fraction of the size of a regulation tennis court.

With most of the PBJs having little to no Pickleball experience, the group received coaching from former St. John's tennis player, Igor Maslov '20CCPS, '21MBA, and current student, Evan Naumann. Evan, a senior in The Peter J. Tobin College of Business, learned the sport from his grandfather, a three-time Wisconsin Senior Olympics Champion in Pickleball.

"It's relatively easy, especially with great coaching," said Maryanne Twomey '89CBA, '95MBA, Director of Financial Aid. "Best of all, it's an opportunity to learn a new game, meet some fellow alumni, and create new friendships. My family laughs at how much I look forward to each session."

"It took me a while to learn how to swing. I used to play paddleball and I was hitting the ball too hard," said Laura Bellacicco '83CBA, '85MBA, who also appreciated the coaches' helpful hints. Ms. Bellacicco is an International Student and Scholar Advisor at St. John's. "I laugh so much. It's an engaging experience for the social connection, as well as for the physical exercise."

Mary Benzie '79C, who played tennis for the St. John's Women's Tennis team from 1975 to 1979, admitted that the sport is not without its challenges—even for a former collegiate athlete. "My first lesson was embarrassing because I missed hitting the ball several times. I had to laugh at myself," said Ms. Benzie, who retired from a 38-year career with the federal government in 2020. "The biggest adjustment was adapting to the smaller paddle and adjusting my hand-eye coordination."

While she enjoys the friendly competition, her favorite part of the PBJs is the camaraderie that has developed during gameplay and after each session, when the group unwinds and cools off at the PBJs' social mixer. "Although most of us had never met before, players introduced themselves and started laughing with each other. It's also wonderful interacting with the student who coordinates the program."

According to Ms. Damiani, there are plans to bring a PBJ group to Florida next year, as alumni from the Sunshine State join together to celebrate at the Naples St. Patrick's Day Parade. "The PBJs are among the friendliest groups of people," she added. "They are not overly competitive—they play for fun and are sociable. If anyone wants to belong to a positive network of people, have fun, release some stress, and take in some exercise, join the PBJs. They are a sheer delight."

## FORMER AND CURRENT RETIREES ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

