

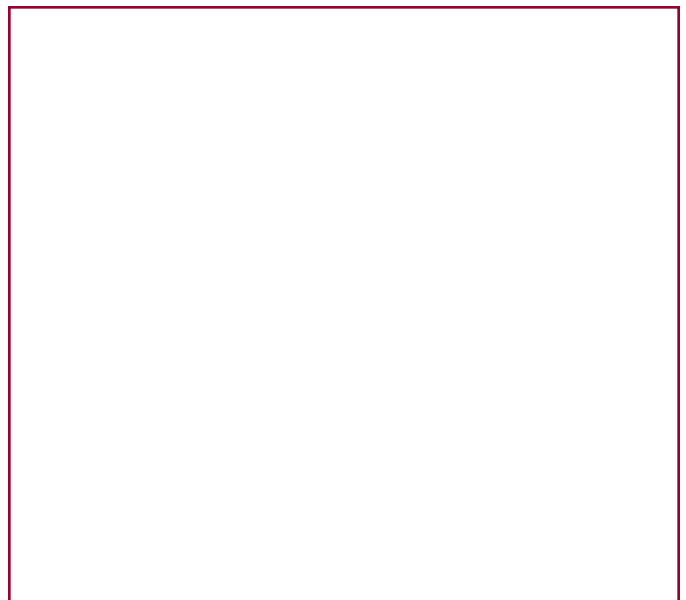
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Dear Fellow Parents,

A hearty welcome to you, members of the Thomas Aquinas College Parents' Association. We parents and grandparents of the College's students and alumni form a vital part of the College and its mission. We are a community that supports and prays for the students — our future leaders — in this unique program of Catholic liberal education. We are our children's first educators, and our concern for their well-being continues long past the time they leave our homes for campus, or leave campus for the world beyond. My hope is that this semiannual newsletter will help to keep our community of parents informed and united.

We begin this issue with the front-page letter from junior David Langley to his parents, Laura and Michael of Lebanon, Ohio. It is an "open" letter because any of the College's students, past or present, could have written one like it to you, their parents. The particulars would vary, but the underlying message would be the same. Through your generosity and guidance, you helped bring your children to the College, and for this they are profoundly grateful — as are we all. I hope you hear your own child's voice in David's heartfelt thank-you, and know that your support and devotion are deeply appreciated.

Liberal education is undertaken for its own sake. Still, it is reasonable for parents to ask — as they often do — how their children will fare in a competitive job market. How can they gain access to employers, and how will they demonstrate the value of their education in their résumés and job interviews?



Liberal Education in the Marketplace

Students Prepare for Life After Graduation at Career Forum and Workshop

“The students who come to talk to me about their post-graduation plans are confident, but apprehensive,” says Director of Student Services Mark Kretschmer. “They know they have received an education that will serve them well in whatever vocation or work they pursue, but they are unsure how to get their foot in the door — how to choose the right career, how to talk about their liberal education in an interview, how to land that first job.”

To address these concerns, Mr. Kretschmer’s Office of Career Advisement hosts professional-development events throughout the year. This year his efforts culminated with an on-campus Career Forum, followed by a workshop dedicated to interview preparation and résumé writing.

The Career Forum, held in St. Bernardine of Siena Library



Campus Life

Students Lead Confirmation Retreat



Throughout the past academic year, several of the College's students have led Confirmation classes at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Santa Paula. In March they held an on-campus retreat for 75 students, which included prayers at the newly installed Stations of the Cross (above).

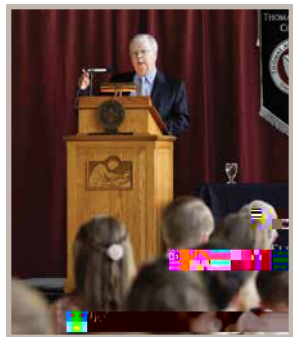


Left from right: Alex Tombelli (13), Magdalen Grismer (15), Res-

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St. Thomas Day





Campus Blood Drive

Mardi Gras Dance

Spring All-College Seminar

¡Felicitaciones!

Alumni & Parents' Associations to Host Taco Dinner for Seniors & Parents on Eve of Commencement

“To the Seniors, we want to say, ‘Congratulations.’ To the parents, ‘Thank you.’ And to Seniors and parents alike, we hope to make it clear that graduation need not mean goodbye.”

These sentiments, says Thomas Aquinas College Vice President Paul J. O’Reilly, are the reason for a new event that will take place at the College this May — the first, he anticipates, in a long-lasting tradition. On the evening before Commencement, the Thomas Aquinas College Parents’ and Alumni Associations will jointly host a celebratory dinner for graduates and their families.

Tlaquepaque, a popular local Mexican restaurant, will set up its grills in the campus picnic area, serving fresh chicken, beef, and shrimp tacos with all the fixings — rice, beans, salsa, and chips. The Associations will provide four free tickets to all seniors, who can purchase extras in advance for \$5 apiece.

For the Alumni Association, the event will serve as an opportunity to welcome its soon-to-be newest members, the Class of 2014, and to make known the networking and fellowship opportunities available to the College’s graduates. Parents will likewise get a chance to learn how their relationship with the College can continue, far beyond Commencement, through the Parents’ Association and its community of faith.

“Above all else, the dinner will allow for us all to celebrate together,” says Dr. O’Reilly. “We can toast the Seniors for their hard work, commend the parents for their sacrifices, and give thanks to God for the many blessings of these last four years and those that are still to come.”

Commencement 2014: Schedule of Events

Wednesday, May 14

Senior Ecology Exam
9:00 a.m.

President’s Dinner
5:00 – 9:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Commons

Senior/Faculty Bowling
9:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 15

Senior Photos
12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, May 16

Commencement Practice for Seniors
9:15 – 10:45 a.m.

President’s Reception
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Doheny Hacienda

Alumni and Parents’ Associations Dinner for Graduates and their Families

Fresh grilled tacos
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Campus Picnic Area

Members of the Parents' Association Executive Committee

Robert Bagdazian, Coordinator
Father of Daniel ('13) and Gabriel ('14)
Director of Development,
Thomas Aquinas College
Santa Paula, Calif.

Laura Berquist ('75)
Mother of Margaret ('98), Teresa ('01),
John ('01), Rachel ('04), James ('08), and
Richard ('10)
Founding Director,
Mother of Divine Grace School
Santa Paula, Calif.

Veronica and Lt. Col. Ret. John Conklin
Parents of Mary ('01), Louis ('11), Patrick ('15), and Margaret ('17)
Homemaker / Oregon Military Department Project Manager
Mt. Angel, Ore.

Joan and Joe Duda
Parents of Kathryn ('03) and Gabriel ('12)
Homemaker / Construction Project Manager
Manassas, Va.

Clyde and Olo Feil, Esq.
Parents of Rebecca ('04), Joel ('06), and Lucy ('11)
Homemaker-Aroney / Aroney
Atlanta, Ga.

Joanne and Dr. Thomas "Murph" Goodwin
Parents of Frater Simeon Charles ('10) and Joseph ('15)
Homemaker / Ob-Gyn Physician and Professor
Alhambra, Calif.

Sherri and Lt. Col Timothy Jackson
Parents of Susannah ('15)
Homemaker / Marine Civil Servant
Manassas, Virginia

Hope and Dr. Keith Maro
Parents of Rich ('03), Rosemarie ('05), Fr. Francis ('07), and Marie ('12)
Bookkeeper / Molecular Biologist,
Researcher

Parent's Corner

Did Thomas Aquinas College Prepare My Children for Life After Graduation?

By **Laura Berquist ('75)**

When people ask me if Thomas Aquinas College prepared my children for life after graduation, I say yes.

I tell them about how my six children, all of whom graduated from the College, are grown up now. Four of them are married, three with children of their own. Four went on to graduate school. One now manages IT for a small business. (Amazing what philosophy prepares one for!) Two are well on their way to earning doctorates in philosophy, with future plans to teach at the collegiate level. Another is a nurse practitioner at