Students explore careers through Scholars Day

By Maria Foss (’20), Knight Writer Student Journalist

On November 19, Lourdes Academy High School students and staff participated in Scholars Day, a day to help students discover careers that they might be interested in pursuing. Scholars sessions involved a combination of tours, hands-on activities and opportunities to talk with professionals in each field.

The goals of the Scholars program are to familiarize students with career opportunities, help them connect the skills they are learning in school with real-world experience, and help them learn about the businesses that make up our local economy, explained Advancement Director Karen Boehm who helped create the program four years ago along with Dr. John Leschke (’76).

“In past years, Scholars Day was an option,” Principal David Mikesell said. “We would set the field trip up on a half-day of school so that students could spend their afternoon at a career session if they chose to do so.”

This year, the program was incorporated into a school day with all high school students participating.

“When Scholars Day was an option, it was always the same 20 to 30 students taking advantage of the opportunity. By opening up the day to the whole school, we were able to expand who this opportunity was exposed to and give everyone a chance to see the different careers that they could possibly be interested in,” Mikesell said.

As in past years, Scholars Day offered many field trips students could attend including business, engineering, medicine, sports, law, law enforcement, natural sciences, broadcasting, construction/trades, military, veterinary medicine and aviation sessions. A survey was administered to each high school student and staff member asking them to choose their top choices from a list of the 12 different sessions.

“Often, kids get through several years of college before they realize that they don’t want to pursue a certain career anymore. Something like this [Scholars Day] may either encourage students to pursue a specific career or learn that that career isn’t meant for them before they go to college,” Mikesell said.

The high school students seemed to enjoy the day and had plenty of positive feedback. Many students said that Scholars Day opened their eyes to careers and helped their interest in a specific job. According to other students, Scholars Day also helped them to learn that the careers

Scholars...Continued on inside flap
that they explored are not meant for them.

“I enjoyed Scholars Day,” Junior May Dunn said. “I went on the Medical Scholars trip and learned all about the technology, which has become very advanced, that surgeons use in the operating room. It was really interesting to be able to go into an operating room and learn all about what doctors and nurses do.”

Senior Max Lippert, who attended the Business Scholars trip, also enjoyed Scholars Day. “I learned that good businesses hire people before finding out all of an employee’s talents. They hire employees and then decide how they can best use an individual’s talents to benefit the company, which I think is pretty interesting.”

“Lourdes students have enough to grapple with during their daily routines without having to worry about locking-in to their life long careers by gradua-

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“The support we received from our alumni to organize Scholars Day for our students is a testament to their commitment to the future, and it would not have been possible without their help,” Boehm said.

Mikesell said he hopes that Scholars Day was a chance for students to open their eyes to the world of careers and discover whether or not they are interested in a particular job field.

Lourdes Academy students visited the Great Lakes Equine Clinic (far left), Oshkosh Corporation’s Global Technology Center (left) and Marian University to learn about careers in veterinary medicine, engineering and medicine respectively during Scholars Day.

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Every Gift Matters...

Your gift to the Lourdes Fund in any amount has a positive impact on our students, our staff and our school.

$50 Case of toilet paper (Yup, we need that too.)

$75 Musical instrument rental for 1 year

$250 New Chromebook for a student

$500 Scholarship for the Tomorrow’s Leaders program

$2,000 Project Lead the Way computer science curriculum

$5,000 Middle school tuition for 1 year

Become a Legacy Member today

The Our Lady of Lourdes Legacy Society consists of individuals who have generously included Lourdes Academy in their planned giving in any amount. Planned giving allows your loyalty and generosity to continue beyond a lifetime. Planned gifts can include bequests, charitable annuities, remainder trusts, life insurance policies and securities. To learn more about the Our Lady of Lourdes Legacy Society or to become a member, contact Karen Boehm at (920) 426-3626, ext. 546 or kboehm@lourdes.today.

Tuition covers only 60% of a Lourdes Academy education. Our generous Catholic parishes cover an additional 20%. Your support of the Lourdes Fund provides the remaining funds needed to support our dedicated teachers, keep tuition affordable, enhance technology, and more. Please consider a gift to the Lourdes Fund at www.lourdes.today/LourdesFund.
Planalp innovates through chemistry

By Julianna Calzada, Marketing Intern

After attending Lourdes Academy, John Planalp ('69) furthered his education at Notre Dame, receiving undergraduate and graduate degrees in Chemical Engineering. John wasn't the only '69 Lourdes alum who went on to Notre Dame; Jack Graber ('69) also attended before going on to medical school.

Lourdes played an important role for Planalp. Many schools now are implementing Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) programs, Lourdes being one of them. But Lourdes had compelling teachers in the 1960s too. Two key teachers, his chemistry teacher Mr. Behring and his math teacher Mr. Rosenthal, influenced his career route.

You might ask, what does a chemical engineer do? According to Stanford University, "chemical engineers conceive and design processes to produce, transform and transport materials — beginning with experimentation in the laboratory followed by implementation of the technology in full-scale production."

Shortly after graduation Planalp joined Procter & Gamble, which makes products found in bathrooms, living rooms and kitchens, such as Tide, Pampers, Bounty, Pantene, and many more. P&G intrigued Planalp, once he learned, during interviews, how much technology goes into consumer products. Planning to be there short term, he ended up staying for 39 years.

"Many of us, like myself, do not know the importance of chemical engineers in the many industries in our country," Planalp said. He went on to explain that most projects his teams worked on combined chemistry (Mr. Behring) with math modeling (Mr. Rosenthal) to find ways to improve a product system. For example, while working on Pringles potato crisps, consumers had complained about the lack of potato chip flavor. Planalp and his team created math models of the dough-making and frying processes. They then used the models to guide experiments to develop more of the flavor that naturally occurs when a "real" potato slice is fried. After taking the work up to manufacturing plant scale, the result was a measurable business improvement.

Other projects included Jif Peanut Butter, Duncan Hines cookies, and Folgers coffee. He also worked on P&G's non-prescription drugs such as Pepto Bismol, Vick's and Metamucil and prescription drugs with indications for heart arrhythmia and bone density increase. Assignments involved work in the US and Europe where he and his family lived for many years. In each case, the route to a new or better products always involved chemistry, and usually involved math modeling of the product or its making process. Planalp emphasized that a third element was always teamwork, something else learned at Lourdes.

Besides chemical engineering, like all Lourdes alumni, family is a huge part of his life. The experience of traveling abroad and attending Notre Dame home games with his family are what they enjoy. He says other hobbies include complaining about his golf game and volunteering wherever he can.

Rudd uses gifts to lead people to God

By Charleigh Reinardy ('19), Knight Writer Student Journalist

2011 Lourdes graduate Eric Rudd has returned to Oshkosh to work as the High School Faith Formation Coordinator and Young Adult Minister at St. Raphael the Archangel Church.

Rudd is a part of a large family; his younger sister Molly graduated from Lourdes in 2015, and he has three older siblings, Jacob, David, and Julia. While Rudd attended Lourdes High School, he ran four years on both the cross country and the track teams. He played on the basketball team for two years and attended the March for Life in Washington D.C. twice while at Lourdes. Rudd was also confirmed through Lourdes but said he took his faith in high school for granted.

After graduating from Lourdes, Rudd said he planned to run track for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, but when knee problems restricted his running, he decided to attend his home town college the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh where he studied business economics.

When Rudd first graduated from Lourdes, he said that he left some of his faith behind and struggled in his faith life the first year of college. He was able to make his second year of college better by rediscovering his faith life and getting involved in campus ministry.

"I had the foundation, but I got into the world and left that (faith) behind. I realized I needed that faith to make good decisions and to know what I was going to do with my life," Rudd said.

Rudd took a year off to join the Spiritus team traveling around the state for a year of ministry. During this time, his faith blossomed. He was giving talks, and others were wondering if he was being called to the priesthood. After encour-
From the time he was in first grade, Carl Thomae ('74) dreamed of joining the Air Force and being a pilot. But in 7th grade, he had to start wearing glasses, and his dream of becoming a pilot faded away. He paid his own way through Lourdes High School and couldn’t afford to even obtain his private pilot license. Until a bulletin board for the service academies caught his eye. Thomae applied for entrance into the service academies and was accepted by the Coast Guard Academy, West Point and the Air Force Academy. He chose the latter. Right before his senior year at the Air Force Academy, the Air Force changed its vision requirements for pilots making Thomae eligible to apply for flight school.

“My junior year, I saw a bulletin board encouraging students to contact their counselor if they were interested in a service academy,” Thomae said. “I didn’t think I could be a pilot, but I figured I could learn aircraft maintenance and be around aviation.”

Thomae looked back at some of the people who encouraged him along the way. His brother-in-law, Bill Schuster ('66), helped him realize the importance of strong academics and high school. Coach Glen Kemp found him a job when he was at risk of leaving Lourdes due to tuition costs. And teachers like Bill Behring put a great deal of effort into teaching not only academics but how to be a better person.

With more than four decades of flying under his belt, Thomae looks back at some of the people who encouraged and mentored him along the way. His brother-in-law, Bill Schuster ('66), helped him realize the importance of strong academics in high school. Coach Glen Kemp found him a job when he was at risk of leaving Lourdes due to tuition costs. And teachers like Bill Behring put a great deal of effort into teaching not only academics but how to be a better person.

“At Lourdes, we were surrounded by good teachers and good students in my class and the classes above me,” Thomae said. “They taught me that hard work and a positive attitude pay off. The students who were older were positive influences. If there’s someone younger, they are listening and paying attention, so keep your comments positive.”

Thomae said a lesson that has stuck with him is that being from Oshkosh means something. He thought leaving Oshkosh that he’d be small fish in a big pond.

“I found out throughout the United States, if you’re doing well in Oshkosh you can compete with anybody. I’m not JUST a guy from Oshkosh, I AM a guy from Oshkosh. I learned that if I did well at Lourdes and if I put in the effort, I could do well in whatever I endeavored to do. I could compete.”

By Karen Boehm, Advancement Director

The 1980s were a time of great change for Thomae. After a 30-year military career, he continued to teach people to fly Lear jets as a civilian for 10 years.

Thomae served 6 years in the Air Force before joining the Arizona National Guard where he flew the A7D and F16. Thomae worked with the National Guard to develop a flying program to teach people to fly at lower altitudes. He flew A7s for about four years, followed by 18 years of F16 training.

“I had the airplanes that broke,” Thomae recalled. “If something could go wrong it did. I was in an A10 inverted at 1,000 feet above ground when the controls locked. What was going through my mind was not that I am going to die, but that I am going to fail. I’ve been in an A10 three times when the engine caught on fire.”

And, if you think flying a plane with an engine aflame is stressful, try being an instructor in the back seat of an F16 with a new pilot at the helm. When the pilot makes a mistake, it’s up to the instructor to recover the plane quickly. Thomae recalls having to eject out of an F16 when the engine quit at low altitude. But the job had its benefits too.

“As a fighter pilot instructor, it was rewarding to be part of the production of so many good fighter pilots,” Thomae recalled. “When the first and second Iraqi war came, I had a lot of students who were pilots. In the 1980s, I gave lectures to Navy Pilots and Canadian pilots on how to fly at low altitudes and helped develop those training programs.”

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Carl Thomae spent decades flying fighter jets and training fighter pilots for the military.

Carl Thomae ('74) spent career in the clouds

By Karen Boehm, Advancement Director

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“I got a pilot slot,” Thomae said. “I graduated from the Academy and went right to flight training school at Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio, Texas.”

Thomae finished at the top of his class and earned a slot flying A10s, a brand-new aircraft. His first assignment was in Bentwaters, England. He flew in bad weather and mastered low altitude flying. After two years, at the rank of 1st Lieutenant, he was selected to be an instructor on A10s at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona.
Meier inducted to Basketball Hall of Fame

Todd Meier (‘83) was joined by his Lourdes Academy varsity coaches Kevin Heaney (left) and Dusty Rhodes (right) at the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame induction.

As a kid, Todd Meier (‘83) remembers shooting hoops in the neighbor’s driveway until he convinced his dad to put up a hoop on their garage. Many hours were spent shooting, rain or shine, even in the snow wearing gloves.

Lourdes Academy Coach Dusty Rhodes recruited Meier to play for the local private school where, as a sophomore in 1980-81, he led the team in scoring and rebounding, earning Fox Valley Christian Conference (FVCC) All-Conference First Team honors.

Despite injuries his junior year, Meier was able to return late in the season to earn FVCC All-Conference Honorable Mention. This Lourdes team was the first in over a decade and only the second one in school history to qualify for the WISAA state tournament. The 1982-83 Lourdes team won the FVCC for the first time since the 1973-74 season while also qualifying for the state tournament for the second year in a row. The team finished 3rd place marking the first time the school placed in a state basketball tournament.

During his high school career, Meier earned FVCC All-Conference First Team, FVCC Player of the Year (leading the conference in scoring and rebounding), Wisconsin All-State First Team, and Parade American Third Team. Meier finished his career at Lourdes as the school’s leader in career scoring, single season scoring, single season rebounds and single game rebounds. The rebounding records still stand today.

In 1982, Meier was recruited by Coach Bob Knight to play basketball at Indiana University where he was part of the regular rotation, seeing action in numerous Big Ten, NCAA, and NIT games. Meier was named co-captain of the 1986-87 team that won the Big Ten championship and earned a #1 seed in the Midwest Region.

Meier was inducted into the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in September. According to Meier, the award is the result of an enormous amount of support from his entire family, especially his parents and brother, Kurt; his high school love Kris, now his wife of 32 years, and their two children; and his outstanding coaches, including Dusty Rhodes and Kevin Heaney of Lourdes Academy and Bob Knight of Indiana University. Most of all, Todd acknowledges these great gifts come from the good Lord above, who makes all things possible.

Young men bond with God through Tuesdays with Mary

By Noah Ralofsky (‘20) - Knight Writer Student Journalist
Lourdes Academy High School male students, fathers, and staff grow closer to God and each other through Tuesdays with Mary (TWM). The mission of TWM is, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to strive to be Jesus Christ’s followers through prayer, brotherhood and example.

The TWM men’s ministry was organized and started four years ago by 2016 Lourdes graduates Christian Pecore, Jesse Boehm, Olivier Nدورiman, Ryan McBride, and Lucas Weber who wanted to start a men’s ministry to grow closer to God and their fellow classmates.

TWM meets weekly in math teacher Don Dineen’s room for lunch to discuss various issues pertaining to the Catholic Church. The meetings begin with a group prayer followed by a student-led discussion about a topic of his choice. All students and adults are encouraged to engage in conversation at any time to share their ideas.

“As the year progresses, I can see the students becoming more comfortable expressing their ideas when they lead the discussions and when they contribute to another student’s discussion,” Dineen said.

Junior Keely Mains has been attending meetings since his sophomore year. Mains believes that both his faith and the friendships of the boys who meet at TWM become stronger.

Sophomore Michael Tushar started attending meetings this year. He is Catholic, and wants to attend the meetings in order to know God on a more personal level. He too thinks the relationships with the boys who go strengthen through God.

Lourdes adds Little Free Library

If you love free books or love sharing books, you will enjoy the new Little Free Library that was installed at Lourdes near Knight’s Field last fall.

The idea of purchasing and installing a Little Free Library at Lourdes evolved last year when members of the Literary Club inquired about raising funds to install one, explained English teacher and Literary Club adviser Jennifer Pollack. The girls raised funds through jeans days.

Pollack said that she hopes visitors, students, and their families who come to games at Lourdes will take advantage of the Little Free Library by either taking a free book or adding a book to the collection. Book donations for all reading levels are welcome, Pollack said. The Literary Club works to promote literacy in the community.
UPCOMING EVENTS

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK EVENTS
Annual Scooter Hockey Tournament
Friday, January 25 - 5:30 p.m.
Lourdes Academy 5-12, 110 N. Sawyer St.

Catholic Schools Week All-System Mass
Tuesday, January 29 - 9:30 a.m.
Most Blessed Sacrament - St. Peter Site, 449 High St.

Red & White Knight Basketball Double Header vs.
Central Wisconsin Christian
Thursday, January 31
JV Girls & Varsity Boys - 6 p.m.
JV Boys & Varsity Girls - 7:15 p.m.
Lourdes Academy 5-12, 110 N. Sawyer St.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS
Spring Musical - The Little Mermaid
Friday, March 15 & Saturday, March 16 - 7 p.m.
Sunday, March 17 - 2 p.m.
The Grand Oshkosh, 100 High St.

9th Annual Awards & Recognition Dinner
Friday, April 26 - 5:30 p.m.
LaSure’s Banquet Hall, 3125 S. Washburn St.

Planning a reunion? Contact Shannon Gibson at 920-426-3626, ext. 541 or sgibson@lourdes.today for assistance.
Lourdes Academy offers free mailing lists and facilities usage for Lourdes class reunions.