



St. Joseph's Indian School  
We serve and teach, we receive and learn.



Mitákuyepi is a publication for employees of St. Joseph's Indian School like **Ann Lenz**, graphics/preflight, who supports the print production of this publication and recently knocked it out of the park designing a new look and feel for Human Resources advertising.

This employee newsletter is named Mitákuyepi because it speaks the mission of St. Joseph's Indian School. Mitákuyepi is a Lakota word used to say, "my relatives." Also, it is the address to an audience that means, "I have something to say." This is the voice of our thiyóšpaye.

Its masthead has a backdrop of sacred sage to remind us that our work is Wakháŋ.

**PROBLEMS?**  
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CHANGE LABEL AND MAIL BACK TO US.

\_\_\_Misspelled name

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Chamberlain, SD 57325-0888  
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## Eighth-Grade Buffalo Harvest Experience

On Friday, October 28, St. Joseph's Indian School eighth-grade students and staff set out through the morning fog for the Crow Creek Department of Wildlife and Natural Resources. In a welcoming gesture, the intimidating fog lifted as they arrived at the destination. Twenty-four students and five adults piled into pickups for a jostling ride across the pasture to the buffalo herd.

Students quickly observed the presence of a white buffalo in one herd, which re-emphasized the event's sacredness for them. White buffalo are wakháŋ (holy) to the Lakota. White Buffalo Calf Woman is said to have brought the people the seven sacred rites of their spiritual tradition.

Once the buffalo had been harvested, Jaxon End of Horn offered it water and grass. Makaia Hurlley gave it cedar tea. Aurora Charger placed sage in its mouth, and Memphis Joseph sprinkled the body with tobacco. Sacred smudge filled the air as students sang a song of thanks to the buffalo for giving its life so that the people may live, offered prayer and sang a prayer song.

Memphis Joseph said, "I was happy to sprinkle the buffalo with tobacco and sing for it because it gave its life for us."

Albert "Buc" Fallis, Sr., Wildlife Director, worked with the school to make the event possible. "Before all else, the day was an experience of thiyóšpaye," explained Mission Integration

Director Joe Tyrell. Fallis and field dresser Josh DeHaai of DeHaai Wild Game Processing have connections to the school and graciously assisted in making plans for the day. Carla Thompson, whose grandchildren attended the school, came to campus later to help prepare the stomach and intestines for a menudo-like stew that will be prepared for use after Inipis.

Amelia LaRoche observed, "It was good to see what our ancestors did to provide for their families at a time when they didn't have modern ways of cutting and cleaning meat." Classmate Gabrielle Rouse added, "It felt like I was connected to my culture through singing for the tháthánka. When the field dresser left parts of the animal on the prairie as an offering to our earth relatives, it helped me to understand about the old ways."

Lakota Studies Teacher LaRayne Woster said, "Spiritually, our kids experienced culture firsthand under the guidance of staff and elders." She added, "I want the students to learn from real-life experience and share with all generations out of respect and humility for who we are as a people."

In the Lakota tradition, every part of the buffalo is used out of respect for the animal's self-sacrifice. A portion of the meat will be made into jerky for use on the Seventh Grade Cultural Trip. Most of it will be ground for meals in the homes and Dining Hall. Some will be prepared as stew meat to serve to families at spring parent-teacher conferences.



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Sacred Sightings

## SACRED SIGHTINGS

Sacred Sightings is a pictorial celebration of God's presence and signs of hope at St. Joseph's Indian School.

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## MESSAGE FROM MIKE

### Constants Are Beacons of Hope, Anchors of Stability



Mike Tyrell  
President  
St. Joseph's Indian School

A change of seasons is upon us. That change prompts me to ask, "What are the constants on campus, and how do these constants affect our work?"

Well, there is the mission. It represents a beacon of hope and an anchor of stability. It targets our effort to work wholeheartedly with those with whom we partner. It's a simple statement in words but profound in meaning.

Then there are words of encouragement. The motto "We serve and teach, we receive and learn" is one example that encourages us to acknowledge that our efforts, if true, lead to greater understanding and greater

rewards. In the motto we find encouragement to "stay the course."

There are symbols like the statue at our entrance and other statutes across campus that remind us of our Christian roots, those with whom we partner, those who inspire us and others.

The buildings on campus are constant reminders of specific programs. They are icons of the wraparound care we provide and serve the practical task of giving us space wherein we do our work.

Sacred spaces are another campus constant. Our Lady of the Sioux Chapel, the Wisdom Circle, the Healing Garden, the Chalk Hills, and even a walk along the river are sa-

cred if one takes the time to reflect. All are powerful reminders of the spiritual dimension that is integral to who we are.

All these constants, taken together, serve as positive reminders. They remind us that we are still called to serve constructively, even amidst change and difficulty. And when we work to serve others in our mission, our students, their families and our alumni benefit.

Although meeting our mission can be challenging at times, we steadily make it a reality together!

*Mike Tyrell*

## QUESTIONS?

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For additional information about St. Joseph's Indian School, its outreaches and the Priests of the Sacred Heart visit:

www.sjskids.org or  
www.stjo.org



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Mitákuyepi

IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY  
ST. JOSEPH'S INDIAN SCHOOL. ITS PURPOSE IS TO COMMUNICATE  
ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES PERTINENT TO THE SCHOOL, TO SHARE IDEAS  
AND INFORMATION USEFUL IN PERFORMING THE MISSION, TO ASSIST IN  
FOSTERING A COMMON CULTURE AND TO REINFORCE THE MISSION AND  
CORE VALUES OF ST. JOSEPH'S INDIAN SCHOOL.

## Four from St. Joseph's Recognized at National Conference



The ability to connect with others, each in their unique way, is the gift shared by four from St. Joseph's Indian School that made them standouts to win Catherine Hershey National Awards. The awards were announced at the Coalition on Residential Excellence (CORE) Banquet at Milton Hershey School in Hershey, Penn., Wednesday,

October 12, 2022. They were among only seven honored with awards nationally.

David and Tia Fontenot of the school's High School Program received "Houseparents of the Year." Annie Schoenhard, a second grade teacher, was honored as

"Educator of the Year," and recent graduate ShyAnne Jumping Eagle was named "Student of the Year."

Jumping Eagle's nomination says she connects through wówačhaŋtoŋnake – a core value of the Lakota. It means sharing not only material goods but also heart, comfort and support. Her Family Service Counselor Darcy Belitz said, "She has a glowing smile that warms your heart." In Jumping Eagle's work as a CNA, her gentle presence and compassion assured residents that she was there to care for them and lend a listening ear. She continues to work as a CNA, and she plans to further her healthcare education after gaining more experience.

Jumping Eagle used a new skill, sewing, to connect with family. Belitz organized sewing bees to teach the high school girls how to make ribbon skirts, which are historical and traditional clothing for Indigenous women. After making

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# Getting to Know the Rec Center Team

Custodian Frank Bunker sums up the Rec Center staff saying, "I had no idea what the three of them did until I was here. I always thought everything happened by magic. They make it look easy, but you have no idea. Give a little shout-out to these guys." "These guys" includes Recreation Coordinator Bryan Rinehart, Rec Center Associate Evan Fleury and Rec Center Specialist Mark "Schoeny" Schoenhard.

A 20-year veteran, Rinehart first worked as a Rec Center Associate coaching football, basketball, bowling, softball and track, and running Rising Eagle Day Camp. For the past 13 years, his role is more focused on scheduling, supervision and hiring seasonal staff. His greatest joys include seeing students smile after a big win and his visits with former students. When the rest of the organization thinks about the Rec Center, he wants them to know that our kids are safe and getting the best instruction in recreation and sports. He expresses gratitude for the resources and upkeep of the Rec facilities and is happy to be back to pre-COVID-19 functioning.

Fleury keeps busy with programming, coaching boys and girls basketball and fall football. You might find him teaching archery to fourth- through twelfth-graders when he isn't immersed in swim lessons. He runs competitive on-campus intra-murals for the High School Program. His mission is to provide as many activities for students as possible. When the rest of the organization thinks about the Rec Center, he wants them to think of it as a perfect place for the staff and students to have fun and burn off energy. His greatest joy is when students break through and succeed.

At the Rec Center for 19 years, Schoenhard loves the challenge of offering the students multiple opportunities to explore different sports, skills, fitness and wellness methods, and cultural practices. He wants to be seen as someone staff and students can approach to find support for their health. His greatest joy is meeting and working with the students, watching them grow and being part of the process. He gladly juggles time to run the summer camp, coach numerous activities and practice with the drum group, saying, "It's not a problem as this is the way I have chosen, and it keeps me young and in good health."

Bunker's mission is to ensure the Rec Center is clean and germ-free. As a houseparent for 26 years, he felt he was part of changing the world. He says, "Now I am no longer changing the world, but I'm supporting the people who do." His day involves working around the various activities at the center. He considers the Rec Center the hub of campus where good memories are made. He credits Joe Hutmacher for ensuring he has what he needs to do the job well. He says his only challenge is cleaning up the day after a game if there is a lot of snow. He gratefully leaves the "grungy" job cleaning the pool filters to the rest of the team. Bunker jokes that he and Mike Tyrell began houseparenting at the same time. "Now he's president, and I am a custodian."



*The Rec Center team consults with Residential to plan programs.*



## Mitákuye Oyás'ín

On October 4, Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and the environment, even the squirrels paused their high-speed food-stashing activity for the morning's observance. At the center of the Wisdom Circle, Chaplin Fr. Greg Schill, SCJ, led prayer and blessed some of the animals that grace St. Joseph's homes and campus daily. The traditional Catholic blessing harmonizes with the Lakota teaching Mitákuye Oyás'ín, a prayer of oneness with all creation.



## Culture Shines for Native American Week

While others celebrated Native American Day on October 10, St. Joseph's Indian School cracked open the cultural spectrum to enjoy all of the light and color of the student's cultural heritage throughout the week.

Students participated in culturally based activities of all kinds from hair braiding to hand games to cultural curriculum. Students dressed to honor their heritage. They prayed the Four Directions Prayer. The Chalk Hills Singers Drum Group—Pahá Makhásan Lowánpí—set the beat for featured Native American social dances on the Wisdom Circle. Friday, "Surprise Day," students and staff were delighted to be served homemade fry bread and wózapí. Red Cloud Indian School and St. Joseph's partnered to instruct Lakota Language basics in a seminar for staff and high school students all day Saturday.



## Annual Red Ribbon Week Begins Early

Friday, October 22, marked the beginning of St. Joseph's Indian School's annual observance of Red Ribbon Week. Sean Milner, executive director of Baptist Children's Village in Clinton, Miss., kicked off the celebration that ran through October 28. His message was simple, "Who you listen to will make all the difference in who you become." He talked about listening to the chip on his shoulder instead of his true self. Milner shared his own story of coming from a family marred by the effects of drugs and alcohol and urged students to avoid that path.

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Monday and Tuesday, students participated in Intercom Trivia to build drug-and-alcohol-prevention awareness. Monday afternoon repeated a favorite Red Ribbon week activity when students tied hundreds of yards of red ribbon around tree trunks across campus to raise awareness of the week's message.



## Students Rock Their Mocs, Celebrate Thiyóšpaye

The week of November 13 was "busyness" as usual at St. Joseph's Indian School. Rock Your Mocs Week began with Lakota Mass on Sunday. Following the culturally infused liturgical celebration, students picked up their moccasins to "rock" throughout the week. Rock Your Mocs is a national annual event that creates a positive cultural experience, promotes unity and celebrates tribal individuality by wearing moccasins to honor ancestors and Indigenous people worldwide.

At 4 p.m. Wednesday, students in the grade and high school programs assembled to walk a circuit around campus as an observance of the week. The school's Chalk Hills Singers drum group—Pahá Makhásan Lowánpí—marked the rhythm for the walk, the heart-beat of the people.

This year, Rock Your Mocs coincides with the school's traditional celebration of a family night on Wednesday of the week before the Thanksgiving holiday. Renamed Thiyóšpaye Night this year in honor of the Lakota extended family, the celebration began when the Rock Your Mocs Walk arrived at the Rec Center. The evening was an explosion of laughter and competition with quick-paced "Minute to Win It Games," and favorite "sleepover" foods like pizza and chips.



## First Wíchóni Wášte Day Builds Connections

Sunday, November 6, was a new beginning for freshman and sophomore students as they embarked on the first-ever Wíchóni Wášte (Good Life) Retreat.

Mission Integration Director Joe Tyrell and Data and Program Analyst Michelle Eggers began to think about the need for such an experience when data indicated that the first semester of a high school year appeared to result in more student withdrawals from school. Tyrell asked students what the Mission Integration team might provide to support them better. Feedback led Tyrell to look at other programs and to develop a culturally appropriate experience for students.

Thirteen students and two staff boarded a bus and headed for the Badlands. The terrain provided the backdrop for exploring life's peaks and valleys through critical reflection on themselves and their purpose in life. The goal was to offer a day of community, culture and relationship building.

A similar experience is in the works next spring for junior and senior students in the school's high school program at sacred sites Bear Butte and Black Elk Peak.

# PEOPLE NEWS



you want to do in life." Failure, he says, is not trying.



**Amapawan (AJ) Bren**, mission advocate, says hands down the best music is anything 80s. Best advice: "Don't worry about the actions of others; focus on your behavior." Failure is not trying; success is working hard, playing harder and being humble, kind, loving and giving.



**Arianne Cepeda**, houseparent, likes to sing along with rancheras, traditional Mexican music that dates from before the Mexican Revolution. Since childhood, she has always wanted to travel the world. She says, "Until you try, you won't know what you can't do."



**Kellie Chasing Hawk**, grocery store assistant, likes her music country and her food Italian or Mexican. She spent many of her younger years on the family farm with her grandparents. Like many in this incoming group of staff, she says, "Never give up."



**Emilee Haugaard, RN**, health center staff nurse, enjoys country music and chicken. Best advice she's received: "Be kind to everyone." She says failure is spilling your coffee on yourself before making it to work. Conversely, success is making it to work without spilling your coffee on yourself. The best part about St. Joe's is learning something new everyday.



working here because she is part of something bigger. She encourages, "Never be afraid to try." To her, success is never giving up.



**Lonnie Seaboy**, custodian, wanted to be a cowboy when he was young. Pasta and old country music are his favorites. Like many in our new employee group, the best advice he's heard is "Never quit," and he doesn't believe that failure is an option. He considers working at St. Joe's a blessing.



**Caden Sharping**, warehouse production support, enjoys a good stir fry and a little indie music. He says he was cuter when he was younger and cites the best advice as, "Just take the next step. Caden says it is a privilege to work at St. Joe's.



**Cindy Spencer**, mission advocate, loves a good steak. She grew up on a farm. She says, "Be true to yourself, follow your gut. Life is short, so get out and live it." For her, failure is not an option. She enjoys her new role because of her coworkers are friendly and helpful.



**Alexis Welch**, houseparent is happy with soothing music and a bowl of strawberries. Her younger self was artistic and introverted. Her best advice is "Don't let others' opinions of you determine your outlook on your accomplishments." Success is doing what brings you joy and peace.

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her first ribbon skirt, Jumping Eagle sewed a ribbon shirt for her toddler nephew and a ribbon skirt for her sister, her nephew's mother.

Quiet and humble, Jumping Eagle was the connector with other girls in the high school program. "Many of the younger girls decided to go out for sports because they knew she was there to support and encourage them," Belitz explained. "She persisted year after year."

The Fontenot's nomination described the couple as going "above and beyond," making connections in various ways, but perhaps none more significant than their Louisiana-bred hospitality and Tia's excellent cooking. She knows every student's favorite food and uses it to build relationships and express love.

When the darkness of grief fell over the girls' home because of the pandemic and suicide, the couple purchased memorial lanterns for each girl, helped them fill them with prayers, notes and special memories, and lit and launched them at a predawn ceremony on the Missouri River. It was a lesson about how we depend on each other when we are vulnerable.

Despite the myriad ways the couple goes above and beyond for the students in their care, they maintain strong connections in the community, supporting countless high school extracurricular activities during their time off, providing meals for families in need and staying active in their faith family.

Schoenhard's nomination for "Educator of the Year" notes, "Connection is a priority with Annie" and describes her as a teacher who wants her students to feel at home, safe and nurtured. Principal Sharmel Olsen adds, "When one approach isn't working well with a student, Annie finds another. She is patient, flexible and understanding with every child."

Schoenhard builds camaraderie in the first through third-grade community. For school-year-end fun, she organized the classes in rows, each child with a bucket. The first child in each row had water in their bucket, and the goal was to pass the bucket overhead, pouring water into the child's bucket behind them without spilling or turning around. She planned the bucket-brigade experience for the connections built through laughter and teamwork.

The Chamberlain community is a better place for the many connections Schoenhard makes through the booster club, brownie scouts, fireman's auxiliary, her church and more.

St. Joseph's Indian School salutes these four remarkable people who build powerful connections in the school community and community at large.

## in Memoriam Fr. Bernard (Bernie) Roskinski, SCJ

Fr. Bernard (Bernie) Rosinski, SCJ, died on November 3 in Chamberlain, SD. Diagnosed with advanced metastatic cancer in August, he was in home hospice care. Fr. Bernie was 88.

Originally from Detroit, Fr. Bernie was ordained to the priesthood in 1952. This year, he celebrated his 70th year as a member of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians). Fr. Bernie had degrees from the Gregorian University in Rome, Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology (SHSST) in Hales Corners, WIsc., and from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. Most of his years of ministry were in education and administration. He taught at

Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, Ind., at Dehon Seminary in Great Barrington, Mass., and at SHSST. He also served in administration for the US Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart as provincial secretary and on Provincial Council. From 1992-1998 he was on the staff of the Generalate in Rome.

Fr. Bernie retired in 2007, but was active assisting with ministries in South Dakota until health concerns kept him closer to home.

Often seen walking the campus of St. Joseph's Indian School, he was a beloved figure. Listen to his "My St. Joe Story" on the My St. Joe Story page of [www.sjskids.org](http://www.sjskids.org).

