



ST. NORBERT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# ALUMNI NEWS

VOL. 4 Issue 1

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June 2025



Mateo Murguia  
with student Luca  
Enea in the fourth  
grade classroom.

## Back in CLASS

Thirteen years after he graduated 8th grade, Mateo Murguia completed his student teaching in the same room he once sat.

After working in the business world for nearly three years, Mateo Murguia wanted a career change.

"My mom is a teacher and I grew up helping her around the classroom and in high school going to her school on my off days to help tutor students in her class," Mateo says. "I realized that I always enjoyed being in that environment and helping kids, so I decided to pursue a career in teaching."

So he headed back to university to earn a master's degree. Along the way he needed to fulfill the student teaching requirement, so he reached out to Joe Ciccoianni, current principal of his grade school, St. Norbert Catholic School.

"I am very grateful to him because he was very open to the idea and I was able to start right away," says Mateo, who spent the last four months in the 4th grade classroom alongside teacher Julie Beville.

Beville says the students enjoyed having Mateo as a student teacher.

"He was very patient with the students and really enjoyed class discussions, encouraging students to share their opinions and ideas," Beville says. "It was clear that he was dedicated to helping students learn and grow."

Students enjoyed Mateo's sense of humor.

"He is such a funny teacher who

see MATEO, page 4



## ALUMNI in the NEWS

### 1980s

**Sean McElenney** (1981) graduated from Mater Dei, earned a bachelor's degree from UCLA then a juris doctor in law from University of San Francisco. Now managing partner for Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner in Phoenix, McElenney focuses on commercial litigation.

### 1990s

After graduating from Rosary, **Beth (Tyszkiewicz) Nesbit** (1994) went on to earn a bachelor of fine arts from University of Michigan. She now works freelance in bidding for visual FX film projects and is based in Canada. Notable works include Green Lantern and Men in Black.

**Jeff Jumpe** (1994) graduated from Servite High School and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in industrial and technical studies. Now based in Arizona, Jeff is helping people grow their retirement savings as senior vice president of technology at Annexus Group.

**Darla (Nesbit) Vietti** (1998) studied graphic design at Loyola Marymount University and Chapman University, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree. She worked for Quiksilver and Hurley for nearly a decade combined and now owns Darla Marie Designs, a custom stationery and graphics company based in Irvine.



(From left) Susan Shaia with son Paul, daughter-in-law Christine and grandchildren Thomas and Mackenzie after a day of whale watching in Oceanside on Mother's Day.

# Family Comes First

**For 25 years, visitors and families at St. Norbert Catholic School were welcomed in the front office by a friendly face who could answer just about any question: Susan Shaia.**

When she left the position at the end of the 2023-24 school year, she did so on her own terms. She didn't want a party or any hoopla. She was ready for retirement and eager to start her full-time role as grandmother to her son's children, Thomas, 3, and Mackenzie, 5.

Since she left SNCS, Susan has traveled to London and the Cotswolds and twice visited Stevie Rhodes, former SNCS accountant, at her home in Portland, Oregon.

And she's just getting started.

"I finally signed up for a pottery class and I'm learning how to use the potter's wheel," Susan says. "Lots of fun."

Susan also spends as much time as

possible with her 93-year-old mother, who lives on the Central Coast.

"I see friends when the time permits and wonder how I accomplished all that I'm doing now while I was working," Susan says.

Susan remembers her time at SNCS fondly.

"I do miss St. Norbert and the beautiful children," Susan says. "I loved hearing them when I walked through the courtyard and being greeted in the mornings, listening to the children sing as they prepared for their music class or spring musical and the Christmas program."

She also listened in when students

see SUSAN, page 3

## EVENTS & AROUND CAMPUS

### Efforts under way to mark 60th Anniversary

As we prepare for St. Norbert Catholic School's 60th anniversary celebration, we are looking for alumni students, parents and faculty who want to help plan events and connect with our community from the last six decades. Please contact Sharon Pearson at (714) 501-0652 or [spearson@saintnorbertschool.com](mailto:spearson@saintnorbertschool.com). Look for upcoming details regarding our big gala slated Nov. 8, 2025.

### Help Those in Need in Our Community

Alumna **Michelle (Ortiz) Navarro** (1990) is heading up St. Norbert Church's Christian Service food distribution and is looking for volunteers 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays. Join alumni, current families and parishioners as they assemble bags of food for more than 300 families each week behind the St. Norbert Family & Youth Center. To sign up, email [christianservice@stnorbertchurch.org](mailto:christianservice@stnorbertchurch.org).

### Music Program Earns Accolades

St. Norbert Catholic School has been named one of the Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants for the fourth year in a row. The criteria for the award focuses on the importance of music in the academic curriculum, teacher qualifications and the school's historical approach to music. SNCS implemented its music

program 37 years ago with a dedicated teacher who focuses on music theory in each of the kindergarten through 8th grades, producing three musical performances a year. The school offers optional instrument and band lessons with biannual recitals and a dedicated music studio. In addition, SNCS has a robust choir that has competed in the Diocese Choral Festival throughout the years.

### Invest in the Future of SNCS

Honor a loved one who valued Catholic education by donating a monetary gift or non-cash financial instruments, such as stocks or mutual funds, to St. Norbert Catholic School. Our needs include:

- **SNCS Endowment Fund:** Provides financial support now and into the future. Funds are used to reduce or stabilize the school's deficit.
- **Tuition Assistance Fund:** Gifts of any amount help families struggling to meet their child(ren)'s tuition costs (about \$8,300/year).
- **Legacy of Light:** Contributions help finance projects that improve the school's safety, durability and energy efficiency.
- **Kathy Oldham Children's Fund:** Supports our school in a way that honors our dear friend Kathy Oldham and her love of family, children, faith and art education.

*To arrange a donation, please call (714) 637-6822 or email [info@saintnorbertschool.org](mailto:info@saintnorbertschool.org).*

### SUSAN, from page 2

debated with their friends and watched them work on their science and art projects at the picnic tables.

"And watching them walk through the gym during PE class and hearing Mr. Farley yelling out encouragement to the students that 'they could do it,'" Susan says.

Then there were the faculty potlucks where everyone came together.

"John Lofffer and the years we worked together and Deanna O'Keefe and her contagious laugh," Susan recalls. "But, most of all, it was the joie de vivre of watching the children from preschool through 8th grade."

### 2000s

**Jamie McCoy** (2001), a graduate of Rosary and California State University Fullerton, earned a master's degree from Western University of Health Sciences and works as a physician's assistant in Orange.

A graduate of Servite High School and San Diego State University, **Ryan Doran** (2009) earned his masters degree from Concordia University and now works as a robotic surgical sales representative at Intuitive and is based in Camarillo.

Servite High School and Loyola Marymount University graduate **Davis Brady** (2009) works with small businesses to find solutions to their human resources and payroll needs as a sales executive for ADP.

### 2010s

A graduate of College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, 2010 alumna **Lucy (Cervino) Hannah** works as a vehicle repair supervisor at Enterprise in Orange County.

### 2020s

**Pierre Balta** (2021) was named Servite High School's salutatorian for the Class of 2025. After graduation, Pierre will continue his studies at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

**Jazzlyn Sandoval** (2021) was named Rosary Academy's 2025 salutatorian. Jazzy plans to continue her studies as a biology major at UCLA this fall.

*Do you have news to share? We'd love to hear! Email your Alumni Update to [alumni@saintnorbertschool.org](mailto:alumni@saintnorbertschool.org).*



## MATEO, from page 1

understands people very well,” says 4th grade student Luca Enea. “He did a really good job teaching us by sharing his stories and experiences since he went to SNCS too. He’s one of my favorite teachers that I’ve had here.”

The desks and carpeting may be new, but the rest of the school is just as Mateo remembers.

“It was weird at first, but I quickly got used to it,” says Mateo, who graduated SNCS in 2012 and went on to Servite High School then Grand Canyon University, earning a bachelor’s degree in 2020. “The campus is exactly the same as it was when I attended school here.”

He says his fondest memories include the 8th grade Washington, D.C. trip, running the halls with classmates, including close friend Dominic Duran, and PE class with Mr. Farley.

And his favorite teacher?

“Mrs. O’Keefe,” Mateo says. “She made my 8th grade year great and always gave off such a positive and supportive attitude to students.”

This month, Mateo earned his master’s degree from Grand Canyon University and finished his credential program.

His last day of student teaching at SNCS was June 4.

“I am just eager to start my teaching career, I am open to any opportunity,” Mateo says. “I would love to teach 4th grade, I have really enjoyed this grade level during my student teaching, but I am also open to 3rd, 5th and 6th grade.”

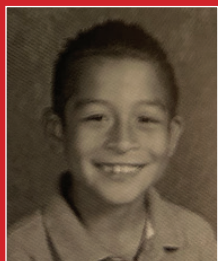
Mateo recently completed another exciting milestone. On May 16 he married Megan Laufenberg, who he met in college, in Oak Glen,

located in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains and spent two weeks honeymooning in Costa Rica.

As he looks to the future, Mateo reflects on the last few months.

“I am beyond grateful to Julie and SNCS for giving me this opportunity and helping me learn throughout my student teaching experience,” Mateo says. “I am so excited to step into my new teaching career and I hope to continue to grow and inspire.”

**Last month Mateo Murguia said “I do” to Megan Laufenberg. (Right) Mateo is joined by brother Cruz (class of 2010) and sister Sofia (class of 2013).**



**Mateo Murguia in 3rd grade**



### STAFF & FACULTY

**Lisa Bartholemey**  
Librarian 1998-2022

**Sharon Dolan**  
Principal 1999-2000

**Audrey Hoffmann**  
School Secretary

**Jeanne Honikel**  
Health Room 1988-1997

**Janet Llewellyn**  
Pre-K teacher

**Irene Soumakian**  
Principal

#### Teachers

Sr. Jane Bonar

Sr. Eveleen Conlon

Sr. Maria Fitzgerald

Sr. Mary Cabrini Fortune

Mother Mary Jarlath

Sr. Florence Lowler

Sr. Anne Marie McKenna

Sr. Margarita Meenahan

Sr. Rita O’Connell (aka Sr.

Mary dePazzi)

Sr. Frances O’Leary

Sr. Mary Raphael (aka Sr.

Carmel Lynch)

Sr. Cabrini Riordan

### STUDENTS

**Peggy Sue (Bunch) Nay**  
Class of 1975

**Timothy Michael Bunch**  
Class of 1975

**James Muckenthaler**  
Class of 1978

**Paul Molthen**  
Class of 1980

**Julie Griffis**  
Class of 1981

**Darin Haskis**  
Class of 1981

**Charley Levandowski**  
Class of 1981

**Phyllis Piszczek**  
Class of 1981

**Bunk Wurth**  
Class of 1984

**Mieke (Riccio) Small**  
Class of 1986

**Ronald Arlt**  
Class of 1986

**Greg Aarl**  
Class of 1990

**Jonathan Schulte**  
Class of 2002

**Alexander Benuzzi**  
Class of 2008

**Kevin Hogate**  
Class of 2012



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