



THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT OF '76

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From The President's Desk

THIS TIME NEXT YEAR

This time next year, the Association will, once again, be involved in negotiations for a new labor-management agreement. A phenomenon that has not occurred for sometime will make 2008 an even more challenging year - the contracts for both the Archdiocesan high schools and Holy Cross High School in Delran, New Jersey, will be expiring on August 31st of that year.

Salary and benefits were, are and always will be at the forefront of any contract talks. But, they are not the only core concepts that will be facing teacher negotiators and the teachers whom they represent. This time last year, issues at the heart of a potential strike in Philadelphia were the System's proposed changes in contract language, language that showed total disrespect for our teachers. System proposals would also have stripped away important clauses which had existed for over 30 years without any problem. Language covering teacher working conditions and rights had been hard won over many years and defended exceptionally well during the most recent negotiations for both contracts.

Keep in mind that while cost of living averages and medical premium increases are being studied and will figure prominently across both tables next year, they are only two of the contract issues upon which labor peace hinges.

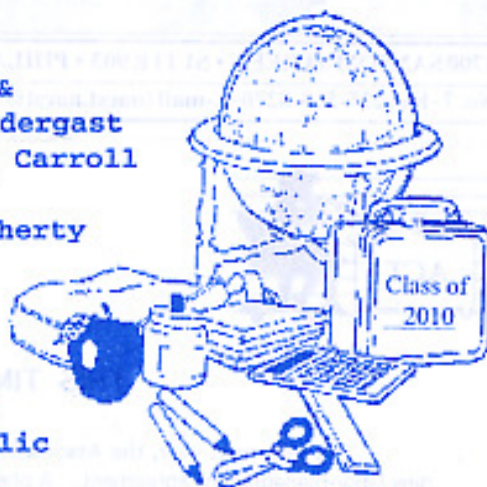
2008 marks the 40th anniversary of the Philadelphia Labor-Management Agreement and Holy Cross' 40th is only a few years behind. There is a lot of history here and both of these Labor-Management Agreements are still considered models across the country. It is vital for all of us to keep them that way.

And, by the way, it's not too early to think about being a member of the 2008 Negotiating Teams.

The 2007 Association of Catholic Teachers John J. Reilly \$500.00 Scholarship Awards

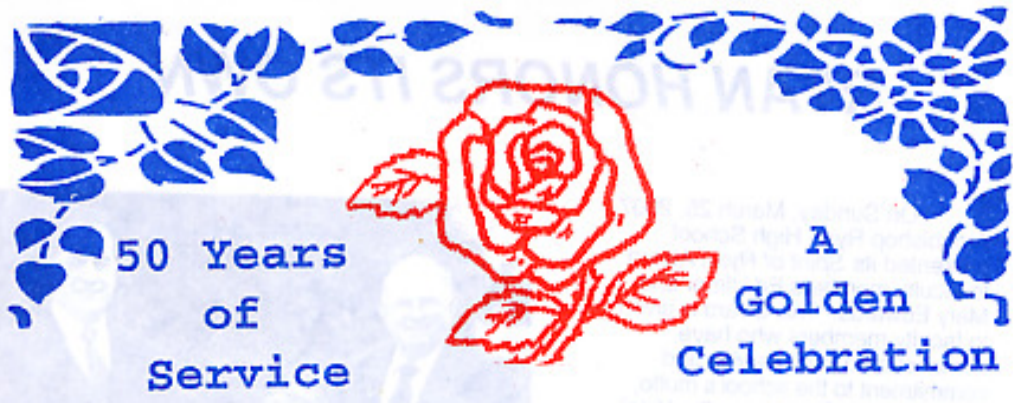
Our 9th Grade Scholars

David Onimus - Monsignor Bonner &
Archbishop Prendergast
Christine Guiffride - Archbishop Carroll
Anna Augustin - Conwell-Egan
Rebecca Searight - Cardinal Dougherty
Audrey Melli - John W. Hallahan
Allyson Shurmur - Holy Cross
Christina Hauck - St. Hubert
Jeremy Konopka - Father Judge
Angela Sortino - Kennedy-Kenrick
Jessica Cunning - Lansdale Catholic
Elizabeth Potens - Little Flower



William Richter - Bishop McDevitt
Janine Gomes - Sts. John Neumann
& Maria Goretti
Michael McCall - Northeast Catholic
Timothy Hagenbach - Cardinal O'Hara
Jeffrey Schulte - St. Pius X
Yunqing Jiang - Roman Catholic
Keith McCollaum - Archbishop Ryan
Jessica Eby - Bishop Shanahan
Portia Herndon - West Catholic
Timothy Schoen - Archbishop Wood

- Congratulations From ACT -



50 Years
of
Service

A
Golden
Celebration

The Association Of Catholic Teachers

congratulates
Edward Torrance

who is celebrating his 50th year of service
to the Secondary School System
of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

25 Years of Service
A Silver Celebration

The Association Of Catholic Teachers

congratulates its members who are celebrating their
25th year of service to the Secondary School System
of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.



Francine Burkhardt
Kathy Holohan
Suzanne Jenners
Eugene Kane
Paula Parker

RYAN HONORS ITS OWN

On Sunday, March 25, 2007, Archbishop Ryan High School presented its *Spirit of Ryan Award* to faculty members Ed Ulmer and Mary Edwards. This award is given to faculty members who have demonstrated loyal service and commitment to the school's motto, *In Vite Mane*, "Remain on the Vine".

Ed, a Social Studies teacher and department head, received his award for stressing the importance of the family and faith to his students and to his cross-country and track athletes. He demonstrates these values every day in the classroom and on the track.

Ed is the most successful Catholic League track coach, having coached for 40 years. He is the face of Catholic League track.

Mary, a Theology teacher and the school's Senior Delegate, has been an inspiration to the faculty and students at Ryan. In the 1994-1995 school year, she initiated the *Ryan Responds* program. At the end of each school year, Mary and her team of faculty and students collect discarded, usable school supplies for the impoverished children in Nicaragua.

She also collects used Religion textbooks, which are sold to students the following year at a discount price. The proceeds from this sale provide scholarships to students at Archbishop Ryan. In the last 12 years, about \$20,000 in scholarships have been provided.

Mary demonstrates as well as teaches Social Justice.

George Todt, a Language teacher and Athletic Director, received the Father Rene Barczak, OFM Award for Service and Dedication to Archbishop Ryan High School. He was introduced as one who hones the job of teacher and Athletic Director.

As the school's soccer coach, he has an outstanding record.

George was honored for providing year round service to Ryan.

George, in his comments, thanked all the role models he has had over the years. They are the ones who taught him how to serve others as a teacher and coach.



Congratulations, Ed, Mary and George!

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

“NO PAY COPAY” for generic drugs has been extended through December 31, 2007

Independence Blue Cross has extended the “No Pay Copay” program until December 31, 2007. Therefore, you will pay nothing to fill or refill your **generic** prescriptions at a participating Futurescripts retail pharmacy or through the mail order service. You will not need to fill out any reimbursement form. Your copayment amount will automatically be waived for all covered **generic** prescription drugs processed during the promotion.

If you have any questions concerning this promotion or your health benefits, in general, please don't hesitate to call Ginny at the ACT Office at 215-568-4175.

PLEASE NOTE: THE “NO PAY COPAY” DOES NOT APPLY TO THE MEDICARE 65 PLANS, INCLUDING PERSONAL CHOICE 65, KEYSTONE 65, AND SECURITY 65.

INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Did you know that you can log-on to Independence Blue Cross website at www.ibxpress.com and get all kinds of information at your fingertips? You can make sure that all your family members are active on your policy, you can order identification cards for them and/or print temporary ID cards, you can check recent and past claims, find a provider, view the details of your benefits, and so much more.

In the same way, you can log-on to the United Concordia website at www.ucci.com and check the status of dental claims, find a provider, order a dental card, etc.

The following article appeared in the March 14, 2007 edition of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Kristen Graham: A teacher's functions are a calculated success

By Kristen Graham
Philly.com Columnist

The Big Game was two months away, but Joseph Caruso wasn't taking any chances.

"On May 9th, we're going to play the Super Bowl, and we're going to win. We're going to get 51!" he told his team. The students in front of him picked up their calculators and dove into a problem that took up half a chalkboard.

Since 1989, 100 of the Cardinal Dougherty High School teacher's 100 advanced placement calculus students have gotten perfect 5s on the College Board Advanced Placement Calculus AB exam, a score achieved by just 22 percent of all students last year. Every student has "passed" the test by scoring a 3 or better, in most cases qualifying for college credit and in every case making Caruso teary with pride.

On a recent weekday at the school in Philadelphia's Olney section, he explained, praised, quipped, teased and guided his class through a set of problems, pointing out possible AP test pitfalls along the way. The test makers are "brilliant, but ruthless," he told his students.

Caruso, 57, moves fast, and he speaks plainly. Tradition is huge to him - his room is full of tributes to classes past. He is a Dougherty legend, an alumnus and a teacher whom students whisper about before having him as a teacher and hug afterward.

His secret? Know people and go from your gut.

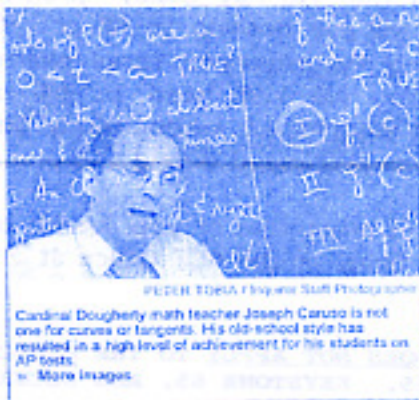
"If you want to be good at teaching, you've got to not only know your subject. You've got to motivate kids, you've got to get down to their level," he said.

Caruso has been a teacher since 1971, and taught his first AP Calculus class in 1981. His students started pulling consistently remarkable scores in 1995.

He said he owes the success to changing the class from first period to third and to having homework problems completed and on the board when students come in. Rather than spending time working out every problem in class, he reviews and devotes a chunk of class to group work.

And he covers material quickly, finishing up all coursework by February. The rest of the year is devoted to review.

"They'll see everything they need to know 10 to 15 times over the course of a year," he said.



PETER TORRES / Inquirer Staff Photographer

Cardinal Dougherty math teacher Joseph Caruso is not one for curves or tangents. His old-school style has resulted in a high level of achievement for his students on AP tests.

[More Images](#)

Students go to extra sessions after school and during lunch periods. Before exams, his pupils come to nighttime review periods that are not mandatory, but always full.

"The kids have bought into it, and success begets success," said Caruso. "But they've got intense pressure on them."

Caruso looks like a math teacher - a trim, short man with oval glasses, white sneakers, khakis, and a short-sleeve button-down with pens poking out of the pocket.

He employs no bells and whistles in his teaching - the most sophisticated device he uses is a whimsy old projector that he hooks up to his calculator.

In many ways, Caruso acknowledged, he is old school.

"I don't put any punches with them," he said of his students. "When they do good, they know. When they do bad, they know."

A 1987 Dougherty graduate, Caruso left La Salle with a degree in math. He did some student teaching, but never thought seriously about anything other than coaching sports. But a spat with the head football coach got him fired from that job and focused him on his day job - teaching math.

Caruso's style is all his own. The hand-sewn tees he wears are gifts from classes past, complete with nicknames and symbols stitched on.

"Heirlooms," he said.

And when he calls on students, it's not "Tam" and "Melissa," he points to, but "Zeus" or "Estrella."

Every student gets his or her own nickname, and Caruso has never repeated one. Most pupils get calls from him over the summer with his suggestion for the name he calls them all year.

That's just one way that Caruso is special, his students say.

"He's the funniest person in the world, and he really wants you to learn," said Megan Edelman, 17, who got "Adephi."

James Won, 17, agreed.

"I can't even use these credits - he's going to Yale and I'm going to Penn, and they don't take AP Calculus credits," said Won, pointing to classmate Tam Nguyen.

Meredith MacDonald freely admits that he's got a reputation among those who have never taken a Caruso class.

"Everyone is terrified of him," said MacDonald, 18.

But Gina Gull said her experience is typical.

"It's the first class where I feel like I'm not struggling, which is kind of weird because it's calculus," said Gull, 17.

Caruso wants pupils to have fun, not just conquer the test.

When weather permits, he runs an extension cord out the window and conducts class on the school's wide front lawn, piping in "his" music, as he does during most classes.

"We'll play Sarah Brightman, we'll play Pavarotti, we'll play Frank Sinatra, we'll play Johnny Mathis," he said.

Then there are Leonardo DaVinci and Enrico Fermi Days, when he teaches calculus through the work of the art and music masters.

The flex, Carl Jenicki, Dougherty's president, is a big fan.

"He focuses on the student, and to be able to sustain that level of success with the amount of variables involved is remarkable."

Caruso said he just feels lucky to get paid for doing what he loves.

"When I get up in the morning, I still like coming to school. I don't like all that other crap the hoopla," he said of administrative tasks. "But I love being in the classroom."

And as for how long he plans to keep going at the current pace?

"Some days I want to say, 'I've got to get out of this place,'" said Caruso. "But I'll go to maybe 75 if I can teach calculus."



A Few Notes Of Thanks !

From: John J. Reilly
Scholarship Award
Winners

"Each year, the Association's Executive Board awards a \$500 Scholarship to the 9th grader in each Archdiocesan high school and at Holy Cross High School, Delran, New Jersey who has the highest general average as of the end of the first semester. If that student is already on scholarship, it is given to the highest student not receiving financial assistance. The \$500 Scholarship is sent to each school to be applied to the student's 10th grade tuition."

Dear Rita,

My thanks to you and to all ACT members for the \$500 scholarship given to Christina Hauck. We are always pleased to see the achievements of our students recognized. I am certain Christina and her family are delighted and grateful for the generous way in which you have recognized Christina.

Sincerely,
Sr. Esther
Principal, St. Hubert

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

I received a letter from the Association awarding me a scholarship for next year because of my ranking at Monsignor Bonner High School. Thank you for this award. I am enjoying my time at Bonner and look forward to continuing my education.

Sincerely,
David J. Onimus

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

I'd like to thank you and the Association of Catholic Teachers for your financial support in my Catholic education. I promise that I will work very hard in my academics in the following years. Hopefully I will be able to keep up the good work I am currently doing now. The scholarship has given me the added incentive to keep trying to the best of my ability.

Sincerely,
Timothy A. Schoen
Archbishop Wood

Dear Rita,

Once again the generosity of the Association comes through in the form of a \$500 scholarship for our number one student in the freshman class: Christina Hauck. We are grateful not only for Christina but also for the fact that you continue to reward and encourage those who do consistently well academically. As with our own faculty scholarship fund, our teachers work hard to encourage the best and the brightest to continually choose St. Hubert Catholic High School for Girls.

Thank you and God bless you for helping us to sustain good students in their pursuit of a quality Catholic education.

Gratefully,
Sr. Alma Rose
President, St. Hubert

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

I am writing to express my appreciation to the Association of Catholic Teachers. Thank you for the very generous scholarship. It came as a very nice surprise.

I have worked very hard at school this year and have enjoyed my year at Holy Cross High School. Your award motivates me to continue to work hard.

Please share my gratitude with the entire Association. Please be assured that I will put the scholarship to good use. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Allyson Shurmar



I See A Future Where More Than Ever Before

...Teachers Need An Advocate

Do you have what it takes to be a Senior Delegate?

If Social Justice in action, teacher dignity and respect are issues that you find important and would like to work with, then, consider running for Senior Delegate at your school.

SENIOR DELEGATE ELECTIONS **(MAY 15TH - JUNE 1ST)**

Responsibilities Include:

Act as a liaison between your members and administration.
Provide representation for your members in situations where any member reasonably feels that disciplinary action may occur.
File grievances to settle issues of opposing interpretations of the contract.
Encourage members to become familiar with and support the contract.
Conduct meetings at the local level.
Attend all meetings to represent your school.
Encourage your members to attend all general membership meetings.
Keep the Executive Board informed of local issues.
Be responsible for conducting all union elections in the school.
Be responsible for the A.C.T. bulletin board.
Distribute information from the A.C.T. Office to the teachers.
Perform duties assigned to you by the Executive Board.
Be responsible for signing up new members and maintaining the good standing of present members.

Note:

This is a good time to, once again, thank all of the Senior Delegates who have served the Union and their own school members so well this year. The A.C.T. Office and the Executive Board need and appreciate your work.