

CANOPY

A PUBLICATION OF THE AQUINAS COLLEGE OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT

3 THINGS TO KNOW
FROM PRESIDENT
KEVIN G. QUINN

NEW SCHOLARSHIP
HONORS SR. MARY
AQUINAS WEBER,
O.P. '58

5 QUESTIONS WITH
JULIE (FERSTLE) '06 &
RENE '98 PALILEO

CANOPY

WINTER 2020

Canopy is a new publication of the Aquinas College Office of Advancement. While we are apart, we want to keep the doors of Aquinas College open to you and share some of the great things happening in our Saints community under the enduring canopy of our beautiful campus.

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AQUINAS COLLEGE

1700 FULTON ST. E
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Aquinas College is an equal opportunity employer and an inclusive educational community rooted in the Catholic Dominican tradition. Aquinas College provides a liberal arts education with a global perspective, emphasizes career preparation focused on leadership and service to others, and fosters a commitment to lifelong learning dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the common good. Aquinas College values: Faith, Learning, Service, and Community.

From Our Vice President for Advancement

Dear Saints Community,

The Christmas season is upon us. Hallelujah! I love this season and the time it provides for us to reflect back on the year and draw close to our hearts the things that mean the most to us.

Though not without its challenges, we have been blessed this year at Aquinas College. We finished our fall semester, limiting the spread of COVID-19 on our campus and keeping our Saints community as safe as possible. This is a testament to the thoughtful planning of our teams and a culture of care and respect within our community. Our students, faculty and staff faced a semester of unknowns and worked together for the greater good. This is what it means to be a Saint.

Despite the trials of the year, we've also made significant progress on several key initiatives. We are on track to successfully complete our \$58 million Contributing to More campaign. We also have great news to share about a recent scholarship fund named in honor of Sr. Aquinas Weber, O.P. '58, a woman who epitomizes the heart and spirit of Aquinas College (more on page 6).

Please know that we miss you and are sending you and your loved ones best wishes for a blessed holiday season. It is our biggest hope that we are able to see you in 2021 to embrace, share good food and drinks, reminisce and laugh together.

Until then, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, Saints!

Stay well and be blessed,



Gina Covert, CAP®
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

P.S. If you are in the area, please drive through campus to enjoy the Christmas lights — a small way for us to say thank you and spread the joy of the season.

OLLI at AQ

Lifelong learning continues “Zoom-ing” along with outstanding classes for our aged-50-and-older students. OLLI’s winter catalog has over 70 hours of academic classes for students to join just for the joy of learning! A sampling of topics includes: “Penguins and Polar Bears,” “Impressionism in Painting and Poetry,” “The Nine Lives of Benjamin Franklin,” “Military Genius, Emperor, Tyrant? Napoleon!,” “The Search for the Holy Grail” and “Update on Alzheimer’s Disease.” The winter session runs from January 11 through March 20. The catalog is online now and registration is underway. You may register for classes no matter where you are in the country!

Go to www.aquinas.edu/olli to discover how to become a member and be part of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute community at Aquinas College!

LET’S CONNECT

To talk about giving to Aquinas College and explore the type of impact you’d like to make, please contact us at (616) 632-2820 or advancement@aquinas.edu



Christmas Break

Holiday Hours and Year-End Giving Reminders

In observance of the Christmas holiday, Aquinas College will be closed December 23 through January 1. The Office of Advancement will be processing mail and checking voice messages during this time. If you need assistance making a gift to the College, please call (616) 632-2820.

To be credited for 2020 tax returns, donations must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2020, or made online by midnight on December 31, 2020.

Special reminder for 2020
The CARES Act includes a few incentives for charitable giving

in 2020. For taxpayers who take the standard deduction, the CARES Act allows you to take an above-the-line charitable deduction of up to \$300 this year. For those who itemize, the act eliminates the cap on annual cash contributions, raising it from 60 percent of adjusted gross income to 100 percent.

If you would like to make a gift of stock or mutual funds or transfer assets from an IRA, please contact us as soon as possible at (616) 632-2820 or advancement@aquinas.edu.

Thank you and blessings to you for a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday season!

Aquinas College, EIN #38-1367080, is a public charity recognized as tax-exempt by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3).



**3
Things to Know**

President Kevin G. Quinn

Shaping Aquinas for the World Now and in the Future

Our vision is for Aquinas College to be regarded among the premier Catholic colleges in the Midwest, recognized for its excellence in preparing the whole person to lead a life of purpose and success in service to a just and sustainable world. Our AQ 2030 Strategic Plan is our guide to get us there. Through this plan, we are exploring our academic offerings, campus master plan, strategic enrollment plan and learning outcomes. Throughout this work, the mission of our Sisters and the Dominican values they’ve instilled in us are evident. If you are interested in learning more, please visit aquinas.edu/strategicplan.

Completing the Fall Semester and Plans for Spring

The health and safety of our AQ community remains a top priority. I am extremely proud of our Saints and how we were largely able to manage COVID-19 on campus this fall. It took a commitment to safety protocols and everyone working together. Our students have demonstrated resilience and dedication to their education. Next semester classes will begin after Martin Luther King Jr. Day and there will be no spring break. Classes will continue to be offered in three modes — in-person, hybrid and fully online.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays

First Lady Terry Quinn and I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas, and we send our very best wishes for the new year. This year has presented so many unexpected challenges and blessings. As we enter the quiet of the Christmas season, I am filled with gratitude for all that we’ve learned in 2020 and for each and every one of you who has stepped forward to help ensure the continued success of our students. We are Saints, and we are family. Blessings to you!

*New Scholarship Named for the Person
Who 'Embodies the Spirit of Aquinas College'
Surpasses \$1 Million Milestone*



For more than 75 years, Sr. Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. has been an integral part of Aquinas College. Currently chancellor emerita, at 97 years old, she was in the office several days a week until the COVID-19 pandemic closed on-site work. Today, she's transitioned to working from home, continuing to develop relationships and connections on behalf of the College.

She is truly a marvel.

Her commitment inspired a group of alumni and friends to come together to do something special to honor her. They launched what has become one of the largest endowed funds at Aquinas: the Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. '58 Endowed Scholarship. As of this fall, the committee has surpassed the \$1 million milestone in their fundraising efforts.

"Sr. Aquinas is viewed by many as the embodiment of the spirit of Aquinas College. We wanted to do something to let her know how important she is," said Lt. General John Nowak '63, trustee emeritus

and honorary co-chair of the Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. '58 Endowed Scholarship Committee. "This is a fund that will stand forever. We'd love for it to become the largest endowed scholarship at Aquinas because we are talking about the largest and most iconic figure," he added.

Sr. Aquinas and General Nowak go back many years. "She used to call me every year and we'd talk about the College and my growing family. She encouraged me to join the Board. I declined initially, and she came to Florida to ask me again directly. No one can tell her no," General Nowak laughed. "She is an absolute treasure to AQ."

When asked what this new fund means to her, Sr. Aquinas said, "My first thought is that there are so many others who are deserving of this who have supported the College for many years. I am flattered and humbled by the gesture."

In addition to gifts to the endowment, a generous donation was made so that

**Sister Mary
Aquinas Weber,
O.P. '58**

AQ Announces the
Sister Mary Aquinas Weber,
O.P. '58 Endowed Scholarship

PHOTOGRAPHY ADAM BIRD



scholarship awards could be made from the fund immediately this fall. Awards are based on financial need and are available to students in all areas of study.

Jeileny Tenorio, a senior majoring in mathematics and business administration, is among the first 50 student recipients of this scholarship.

Jeileny has made the most of her time at AQ, studying abroad, serving as a student ambassador for three years and spending her summer with Dwelling Place Grand Rapids, where she was an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). Jeileny has also used this time to grow in her faith. "Through this community, prayer and my relationship with God, I understand more why I practice the way I do as a Catholic," Jeileny said.

As a first-generation college student, Jeileny applied to colleges but worried whether her family could afford it. Her parents were supportive and eager to help, but she also didn't want to overextend them or herself.

"Having access to scholarships has allowed me to worry less about the financial side of school and focus on my studies. It says a lot about the influence of this school and Sr. Aquinas that people want to give back like this to help current students," Jeileny said.

"I am really happy that this will go on long after I've left this world to help students who need support," Sr. Aquinas said. For those receiving these awards, Sr. Aquinas has two wishes. First, she wants them to show those around them how their Aquinas education prepared them for career success. Second, she hopes they give back to the fund someday to help the students following in their footsteps.

"There is a great sense of community here. We do things together and we step up for one another," Sr. Aquinas said. "To everyone who has supported this scholarship effort, I thank you from the bottom of my heart."



Jeileny Tenorio is one of the first student recipients of the Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. '58 Endowed Scholarship.



SISTER MARY AQUINAS WEBER, O.P. '58 ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

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Kevin G. Quinn, Ph.D.



JOIN US!

If you would like to make a gift to support the Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. '58 Endowed Scholarship, please visit www.aquinas.edu/SrAquinasScholarship. You may also submit a gift using the envelope included in this publication or contact us at (616) 632-2820 or advancement@aquinas.edu.

Planned Giving

Support Your Passions Well into the Future

THE THOUGHT OF LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLAN TO AQUINAS COLLEGE MAY SOUND COMPLICATED, BUT THAT COULD NOT BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

Here are a few simple options for planning a gift — some you can do on your own right away and others may require working with an advisor.

Include a gift to Aquinas College in your will or living trust.

The benefit: You retain control of your assets during your lifetime and can make adjustments to your gift at any time. If your estate is subject to estate tax, your gift is entitled to an estate tax charitable deduction for the gift's full value.

Name Aquinas College a beneficiary of your retirement account.

The benefit: This is easy to accomplish by completing a change-of-beneficiary form from your provider. You can specify an amount or a percentage of your plan. When the time comes, these assets pass to Aquinas tax-free. If passed to your loved ones, they would have to pay income tax when distributions are made from the account.

Make Aquinas College the owner of a life insurance policy.

The benefit: You qualify for a federal income tax charitable deduction when you itemize on your taxes. If you continue to pay premiums on the policy, each payment is tax-deductible as a charitable gift when you itemize.

If you wish to maintain ownership, you have the option of simply naming Aquinas a beneficiary of a specific amount or a percentage. You can also make us the contingent beneficiary to receive the balance of your policy only if your primary beneficiary doesn't survive you.

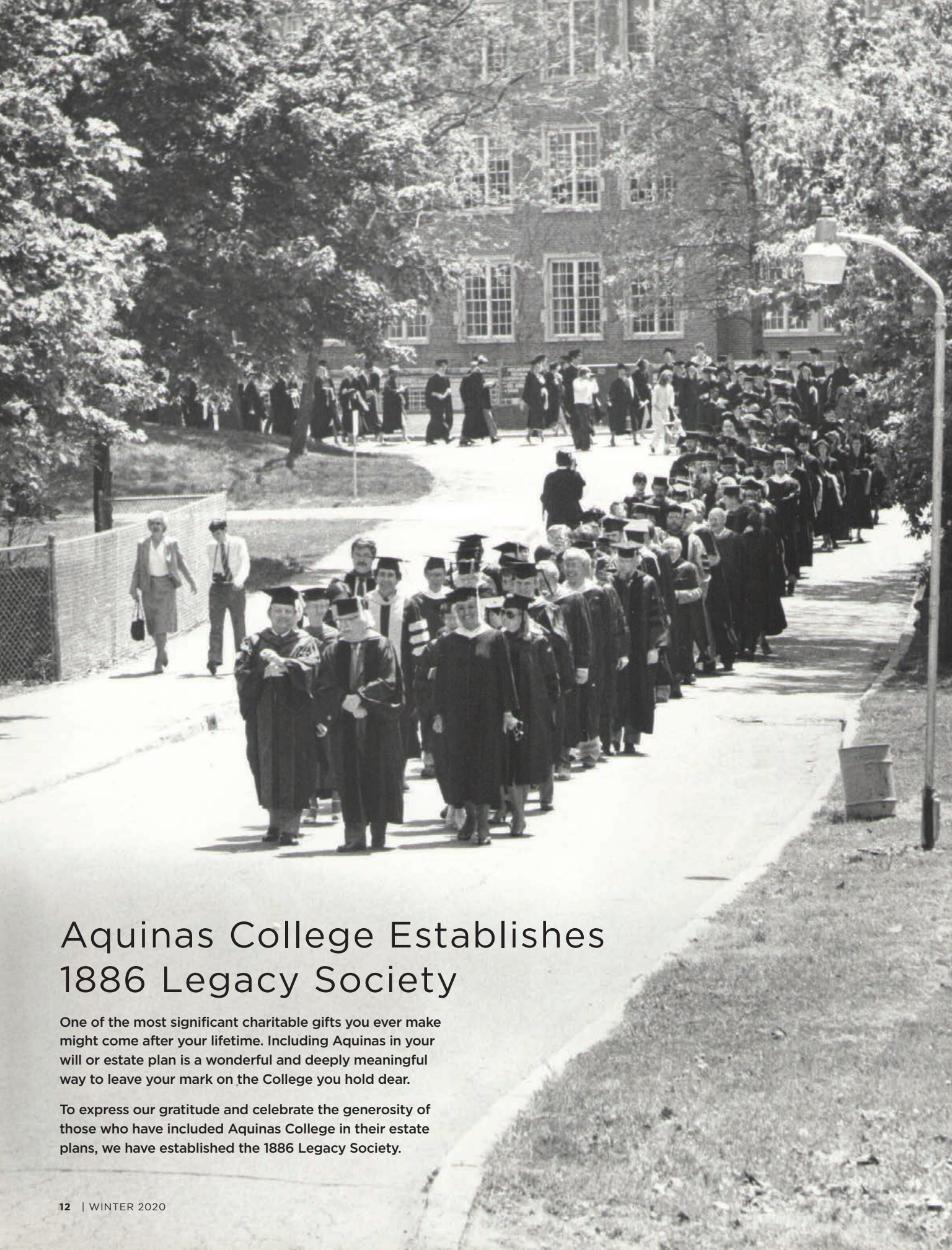
Create a life income gift.

The benefit: Depending on the type of gift you choose, you can receive a stable income for life or for a period of up to 20 years for yourself or a loved one. You may also qualify for a federal income tax charitable deduction in the year you make the gift.

LET'S CONNECT

There are many ways you can ensure that your support for Aquinas College continues for years to come.
Contact us at (616) 632-2820 or advancement@aquinas.edu.





Aquinas College Establishes 1886 Legacy Society

One of the most significant charitable gifts you ever make might come after your lifetime. Including Aquinas in your will or estate plan is a wonderful and deeply meaningful way to leave your mark on the College you hold dear.

To express our gratitude and celebrate the generosity of those who have included Aquinas College in their estate plans, we have established the 1886 Legacy Society.



Why 1886?

1886 is the year Aquinas College's story began. It is the year that Dominican Sisters, under the leadership of Mother Aquinata Fiegler, established the Novitiate Normal School in Traverse City. That school transferred to Grand Rapids in 1911. By 1922 it evolved into Sacred Heart (later Marywood) College and then Catholic Junior College. In 1940, the name was changed for the final time to Aquinas College.

The 1886 Legacy Society connects us to our history. It also pays homage to our Dominican Sisters - Grand Rapids, the legacy they've created and the countless lives they've touched through their ministry of education.

How does one join the 1886 Legacy Society?

Becoming part of the 1886 Legacy Society is easy — just let us know that you've included a gift to Aquinas in your long-term plans (learn a few simple ways to accomplish this on page 11). You will find a checkbox to notify us on the return envelope included in this publication.

A team member will be in contact to welcome you to the society and ask a few questions. We want to be sure that we have a clear record of your intentions for your eventual gift, so we can honor your wishes when the time comes.

What does being part of the 1886 Legacy Society entail?

This society aims to thank and celebrate people like you, who care enough about Aquinas to plan ahead. As a member of the society, you will receive contact and updates about Aquinas from College Leadership. We will list your name in future editions of this publication. You will also receive invitations to exclusive Aquinas College events — when we are able to host them again safely.

READY TO LEARN MORE?

To talk about making an impact at Aquinas College through your will or estate plan, please contact senior philanthropy officer Cecilia Cunningham at (616) 632-2816 or cunnicec@aquinas.edu.

Giving Back to AQ

5 Questions with Julie (Ferstle) '06 & Rene '98 Palileo

In each issue of Canopy, we feature alums who have given back to Aquinas College with financial support. Rene and Julie Palileo are supporters of the Aquinas Annual Fund and the Roots Scholarship — a fund established by Rene and a group of lifelong friends who met at Aquinas.

PHOTOGRAPHY MATT YEOMAN

1.

You are an AQ couple. Tell us how you met.

Julie: At the time, Rene was the new director of alumni relations and I was the student volunteer coordinator for Campus Ministry. We partnered on a student and alumni volunteer cleanup in the Heartside Neighborhood and developed a friendship.

Rene: One day, we were walking on campus with Mary Clark-Kaiser, then director of campus ministry. We were laughing and Julie walked ahead of us. Mary gave me “the Mary look” and said, “You two should get married.” Three days after her graduation, Julie asked me out on our first date.

2.

How did you choose to attend AQ?

Julie: My first time on campus, I made connections with people who would be a part of my life forever. My tour guide was Amy (Westphal) Peters '05. That day, I had lunch with her and her now-husband, Seth Peters '03. They remain close friends; Seth is the godfather of one of our children.

Rene: I got an invitation to tour Aquinas, and while on campus, I was approached by a guy out jogging. He welcomed me and asked me if I was new. It was Paul Nelson, then president of the College. He encouraged me to take in the campus. I did and it felt right.

3.

How did your experience at Aquinas shape who you are today?

Julie: Going to a school focused on liberal arts and with an emphasis on social justice helped me develop a broader worldview. I also had experiences at AQ that I don't think I would have had at other places. I attended every retreat possible — CYBIAC, the silent retreat and on-campus events.

Rene: Aquinas helped me be part of a community, give back and be of service to others. Prayer has been incredibly valuable throughout the pandemic: I can go for a walk, look at the trees and connect back to memories from college.

4.

What is your most significant takeaway from Aquinas?

Rene: I made lifelong friends at Aquinas. A group of us lived together at Knappe Hall and together we started the SAVE recycling program. Twenty-five years later, we are still in touch and get together one weekend a year for fun and to talk about life. A few years ago, we started the Roots Scholarship together. Aquinas has done so much for us and there is so much pride there. The AQ branches are strong.

5.

As alumni, why is giving back important to you?

Julie: So much of what we have and what we've experienced started at Aquinas. There's a sense of responsibility to pay it forward, so other students have the same opportunities. We want others to have the chance to put down roots and grow from that place.

LET'S CONNECT

If you are an alumnus who wants to explore ways to get more involved, we'd like to hear from you! Drop us a line today at alumni@aquinas.edu or join our online directory at aqsaintsnetwork.com

Rene works for the Ford Motor Company Fund and Julie is an elementary instructional specialist. They live near Detroit with their children Mariana, Dominic, Antonio and Gabriel.

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