

SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY FATHERS' CLUB RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER, FACULTY MEMBER AND STUDENT WITH ANNUAL AWARDS

MENDOTA HEIGHTS, Minn., April 26, 2010– The Saint Thomas Academy Fathers' Club presented its annual awards at the Father/Son Banquet held Wednesday, April 21. The three awards honor an outstanding volunteer, faculty member and junior student.

The Nicholas Masciopinto Leadership Award – P. Griffin '11

This award memorializes the life of Nicholas Masciopinto '03, who taught the Saint Thomas Academy community how to live, laugh and learn fully, without judgment or prejudice and with hope, faith and perseverance. This award is given to a junior student, who, through dedicated and disciplined commitment, has exercised his talents to the betterment of the Academy and the community at large.

Theology teacher Kathy Miley nominated Griffin for the award because she has witnessed his ability to achieve a great sense of balance between his studies and his community service. While he works hard academically, he also makes service at Feed My Starving Children a priority because he knows his contribution is changing the lives of children in developing countries. She has also seen him reach out to his peers with support and compassion.

"I enthusiastically nominated [him] for the Nick Masciopinto award as someone, like Nick, who is passionate about life and the difference he can make in it!" Miley said.

The Archbishop John R. Roach Volunteer Award - John McDonald, Jr. '73

This award was established soon after the passing of the Archbishop in honor of his memory and his many lasting contributions to the school. Archbishop Roach was a professor, dean of students, and founder and headmaster of the Academy in Mendota Heights. Each year the Fathers' Club honors an individual volunteer who has demonstrated uncommon leadership and effort in the betterment of the school.

The late John McDonald '73 received the volunteer award for "uncommon leadership and efforts in the betterment of Saint Thomas Academy." His widow, Ann McDonald and daughter Ellie accepted the award on his behalf. Son Will '09 was away at college. John was the 2008-09 president of the Fathers' Club, was instrumental in organizing Class of 1973 reunions and gatherings, and was a generous benefactor of Saint Thomas Academy.

The Michael Rongitsch Faculty Award - Joshua Kaeppe, social studies teacher

This award was established after the passing of Mike Rongitsch, beloved mathematics teacher and coach, to honor a faculty or staff member who best exemplifies the spirit of the Academy and honors Rongitsch's memory.

Social Studies teacher Joshua Kaeppe was introduced as a popular teacher and "rock star" among students. "He masters the material he presents in class, and makes it interesting and relevant. He has high but fair expectations of his students, and he insists that the students treat each other with dignity and respect. He provides parents with helpful insights as to how their sons learn and how parents can help guide them to maximize their academic potential."

About Saint Thomas Academy

Founded in 1885, Saint Thomas Academy is an all-male, college preparatory, Catholic, military/leadership school committed to preparing young men to succeed in college and in life. Nationally accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS), the academy challenges young men to excel academically, spiritually, morally and physically in and out of the classroom.

