



# ALUMNI NEWS

*Navigating our way back home*

August 2021  
Volume 1 Edition 1

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## WELCOME

to our first edition of the St. Brendan Catholic Elementary Alumni newsletter. Our goal is to print three or four issues a year to keep you updated on what is happening over at your Alma Matter. In order to accomplish this we will need your help. Thousands of students have passed through these halls and many of them have a story or two to share about what's been going on since graduation. We would like to feature some of these stories, as well as old + current photos in future issues; please e-mail them to:

[sbealumni@stbrendanmiami.org](mailto:sbealumni@stbrendanmiami.org)

One of the goals of this association is to connect the community of Navigators that have graduated. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to fellow SBE Alumni.

For business advertising opportunities in future newsletter issues, please contact our Development Office at (305) 221-2722 Ext. 2419 or e-mail: [jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org](mailto:jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org).

### A Message from our Principal

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you back to St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School. You are a member of an elite group who, for the past seven decades, have been exposed to teachers who have fostered your faith and stimulated your intellect while ensuring growth in confidence and development of the skills required to survive in this rapidly changing world.

These most recent years have been a prime example of how technology and education are constantly and rapidly evolving. We have witnessed teaching from podiums and chalkboards to most recently teaching remotely from home. Our middle school students have progressed from a backpack full of textbooks to an iPad. Our need to prepare our students for a constant changing environment has become more crucial than ever.

Our mission is to continue educating students to become well rounded, compassionate individuals who live their faith by following the Gospel values of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. We are committed to the spiritual and intellectual growth of the whole child by nurturing our student's Catholic faith and fostering their academic development through a rigorous curriculum presented in a learning environment that is conducive to high levels of student engagement with continuous evolving technologies. We strive to give each student the opportunity to participate in a diverse curriculum that challenges them to excel at the highest level. I am very proud to say that each year our students rise to this challenge. Our graduates widely spread throughout the country showcasing their excellence and making a difference everywhere.

Our Alumni community is as meaningful to our school as our student body. Your success is our school's success, and it is our privilege to call each of you alumni.

We strive for our students to follow in the footsteps of our alumni and embrace stewardship, service, community and leadership, while adhering to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

We look forward to meeting and showing you why St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School's legacy is one that you will want to be a part of. Please contact our Development Office (305) 221-2722 x2419 to schedule a campus tour and return to brick filled hallways that contain so many rich and storied memories.

May God continue to bless you and your families always.

*Mrs. Cristina Capote-Alonso, M.Ed*

# When the Student becomes the Teacher



Pictured from left to right: Kayla Rodriguez, Samantha Holland, Rodolfo de la Noval, Natalie Pardo, Emely Rodriguez, Melissa Marino, Carolina Urquia and Robert Caminas.

St. Brendan Catholic Elementary ("SBE") has eight alumni who have come full circle and have returned to their Alma Mater to teach and serve the next generation of students. You can find them in every hall of the school, teaching a spectrum of students from Pre-K to 8th grade. We recently had the opportunity to sit down and hear their unique perspective on how SBE prepared them for the future, shaped them as teachers, and why they decided that twelve years at SBE simply was not enough.



**KAYLA NICOLE RODRIGUEZ, 4<sup>th</sup> grade • Class of 2014** • "My fondest SBE memory as a student was being awarded Valedictorian of my 8th grade class and giving my speech at graduation in front of all my family, peers, and teachers. At St. Brendan, I came across many teachers who not only inspired me to become an educator but who were role models for the type of teacher that I wanted to become. The teachers here were always so kind, compassionate, patient, and truly embodied what it meant to be an educator."



**SAMANTHA "SAM" HOLLAND, Kindergarten • Class of 2012** • "SBE is home. I am blessed to be a part of a community as special as ours. I wouldn't be the educator that I am today without the guidance and support from SBE. My fondest memory is the fair. Spending that time with family, friends, and teachers was so special. It was nice to have everyone come together."



**RODOLFO "FITO" DE LA NOVAL, P.E./Athletic Coach • Class of 1997** • "I enjoyed representing St. Brendan and playing baseball, basketball, and Cross Country against other schools. St. Brendan instilled many positive habits and qualities that prepared me for life as Educator. I returned to St. Brendan in 2008 because it felt like home. I also wanted to be a good role model for the students and help guide them to become a good person."



**NATALIE "NATY" PARDO, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant • Class of 2000** • "SBE really gave me a solid foundation for life in general. Since a young age I always wanted to be a teacher because I adored my teachers growing up. I was always a "helper" in class. I always knew that my kids would come to SBE, there was no question about that! Now that I work for the school too, my life has come full circle. My parents worked so hard to give my brother and I the opportunity to come to this school and I feel so fortunate and blessed to be able to give my daughters the same gift and to now work for the school too is just the best feeling."



**EMELY RODRIGUEZ, Pre-K 2 Assistant • Class of 2012** • "SBE gave me a well-rounded education and taught me to be the best version of myself. They gave me the foundation to be the person and educator I am today. I came back to SBE because it has always felt like home to me, the atmosphere there is just so welcoming and loving."



**MELISSA "MELI" MARINO, Pre-K 4 • Class of 2000** • "My whole family has gone to SBE (My mother, my two uncles, my sister, and I). I was actually the first Pre-K 3 class (Bambolinos). So, this school has always been my home. I remember always hearing the phrase "It takes a village to raise a child. It is because of the "village" of teachers I had throughout my 11 years at SBE, I am the passionate, faith-driven, patient, and loving educator I am today."



**CAROLINA "CARO" URQUIA, Pre-K 3 Assistant • Class of 2015** • "My favorite memory as an SBE student is always feeling that I had a second home. My best friends are alumni from SBE and some of the most important people in my life today were my teachers there. One of my friends suggested I apply to work at the after school care program. Two months into working at SBE I changed my major and realized my true passion as an educator. I am beyond grateful for being given the opportunity to not only attend but to work at Saint Brendan."



**ROBERT CAMINAS, 8<sup>th</sup> grade • Class of 1994** • "SBE prepared me to be a teacher in many ways. Most importantly it taught me the values and morals that formed the foundation for everything in my life and I have been able to instill the same values and morals in my teaching. Additionally, I had some wonderful examples of great teachers. Teachers like Mrs. Nati Vejo, Mr. Juan Del Sol, Mrs. Susie Diaz, Mrs. McShane, Ms. Fondas, Mrs. Maria Wills (who I am so honored to call a colleague nowadays), Mrs. Moragas, Mrs. Hipson, Mrs. Betty Lipscomb, Ms. Consuelo Bofill and many others that I may not have mentioned here. Their teaching styles and passion for teaching made a profound impact on me and helped shape the teacher that I am today."

# NAVIGATING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

## The Capital Campaign

St. Brendan Catholic Elementary continues to evolve to ensure that our physical campus meets the academic mission of the school. Your generosity, no matter the size, will help raise funds and other resources to support our academic, capital and endowment needs.



Our priority to improve and expand our facilities will focus on:

- Construction of a new 10,000 sf., two-story Administration Building and 1st grade classrooms;
- Construction of a new 9,800 sf PK building;
- Demolition of the old PK building;
- Phase I construction of a new 17,780 sf Multipurpose building;
- Roadwork, adjust playfields and construction of new parking lot;
- Demolition of the old Media Center; and (7,350 to 20,000 sf).

We need to raise \$3 million in order begin the first phase of expansion.

We are asking our entire St. Brendan Catholic Community to rally as one and donate or pledge to help us reach our goal. With your collective support we will fortify the future and allow the improvement and expansion of our school facilities.

We are just beginning! St. Brendan Catholic Elementary is focused on improving and enhancing our curriculum and campus as we carry our school into the future. We invite you will walk this journey with us.



## THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS THAT YOU CAN HELP.

### Support St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School.

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com),  
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

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Amazon Smile is a simple way for you to support us every time you shop, at no cost to you. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. When you shop on [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), select St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School as your charitable organization and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase to support our programs.



# MORE WAYS TO HELP...

## NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Classroom Sponsorships help furnish the classroom with the furniture and technology needed to facilitate student learning. Each classroom sponsor will have their name on a plaque beside the door of their sponsored room.

Want to leave your footprint? Learn more about the dedication opportunities currently available at St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School by contacting our Development Office at (305) 221-2722 x 2419 or email [jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org](mailto:jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org).

To view available classrooms to sponsor, please visit [www.stbrendanmiami.org](http://www.stbrendanmiami.org).

Monetary donations are being accepted electronically on our website at [www.stbrendanmiami.org](http://www.stbrendanmiami.org) or may be dropped off in person at the school office. Every donation counts! St. Brendan Catholic Elementary is recognized by the IRS under section 501-C-3 as a tax-exempt organization therefore Capital Campaign gifts are tax-deductible.

## MONETARY DONATIONS

## GIFTS IN-KIND

Please contact our Development Office at (305) 221-2722 x 2419 or email [jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org](mailto:jquintero@stbrendanmiami.org) in order to have your gift in-kind approved. Gifts not previously approved will not be accepted.

## LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

Stay Connected - We want to know how you're doing. Please be sure to follow us on Instagram and Facebook for the most up to date information on your Alma Mater.



Please share this QR code with alumni that would like to sign up to receive our updates.

## CONNECT WITH US



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