



# Christian Brothers Academy Purple and Gold Award

April 15, 2023

Joseph Leone, class of 1968 and St. Joseph, the patron saint of the Christian Brothers, have a lot in common. St. Joseph “offered himself in love” and “exercised patience and offered hope every day, though far from the limelight,” similarly, Joe Leone exemplified this dedication to family and community. Both put their service to others and their families at the forefront of their values, making sure that they were always doing whatever they could to help those in need. As a dedicated family man and CBA volunteer, Joe Leone embodied the same kind of love, care, and compassion St. Joseph is known for.

Joe always referred to CBA as his “happy place,” providing him with the connections and community he cherished for a lifetime. He was a class officer and played basketball all four years at CBA (1964-68). After graduation, he continued his passion for the sport by taking his talents to play at Hartwick College. Joe met the love of his life, Laurie, during his time at Hartwick and traveled back to visit her every weekend after he graduated to continue building their loving relationship. They eventually tied the knot on October 14, 1972, and together they raised four beautiful children. Joe’s dedication to his family was unmistakable, and his commitment to CBA did not go unnoticed – his four children graduated from the school: Jason ‘94, Joseph A. ‘97, Lindsay ‘97, and Gregory ‘00, cementing their status as a “Legacy Family.”

Joe was not just any alumnus of Christian Brothers Academy. He embodied and lived the Lasallian spirit of service and dedication in everything he did. He spent his career in Human Resources at National Grid, where he left a lasting impression on anyone who had the pleasure of working with him. Joe was a sincere, helpful, and reliable employee – the kind any company would be lucky to have. He saw the best in people in his everyday work, and his positive attitude inspired those around him.

Throughout Joe’s life, he remained committed to CBA in various capacities, and was truly an active presence on campus. He was a class agent, worked the alumni phonathon, attended alumni association meetings and participated in and chaired his class reunions and Jubilee reunion. Joe was President of the Booster Club and was instrumental in starting the Lasallian Athletic Hall of Fame in 2000.

Director of Athletics Buddy Wleklinski remembers Joe fondly, stating “he was one of those guys that was always there when you needed him.” With his dedicated support and willingness to help, he became an invaluable member of the community. He sat alongside his friends, Tom Niland and Dave Venditti, at the scorer’s table during basketball games and in the press box helping to announce football games for many years. Joe was CBA’s biggest fan, often cheering on the Purple and Gold at most boys’ and girls’ basketball games.

Basketball was Joe’s passion, which he put into action as coach of the JV girls’ basketball team with his lifelong friend, Tom Niland. He dedicated countless hours and basketball advice in his fatherly, gentle, and kind way, leading the girls to several successful seasons. Joe’s dry and witty sense of humor truly made him one of a kind. He often used it to provide some much-needed comic relief during tense moments of the games. In many ways, his humor helped to lighten the mood and bring perspective, inspiring the girls to see the positive aspects of difficult situations. Tom describes Joe’s important role as a coach saying, “While I may have been a little more vocal than Joe on the court, he was always the calm voice to keep me in check and keep the girls from crying.”

When you ask those who knew and loved Joe, they all shared the same sentiment: Joe was the quintessential family man, always present for his loved ones. The one thing he loved more than his Detroit Tigers was his family. Joe never missed a Tigers game, whether watching in “Kahunaville” or listening on the radio, while still making sure not to miss his children’s and grandchildren’s sporting events and activities. If his sons were playing college basketball the same day, Joe would travel to Hamilton in the afternoon to see Greg, then to Oswego to see Joe in the evening. He would spend valuable time with his parents, later shopping for his mom and helping her with chores and errands upon his father’s passing. Whether he was sharing basketball stories, giving basketball advice, or helping his son at his home to keep the woodpeckers away, he was always there to help. Joe was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, son, friend and CBA alumnus.

It is with great sadness that we continue to mourn Joe’s passing on September 28, 2022. Laurie reflects on what would have been their 50th wedding anniversary a few weeks after Joe had passed. She fondly states, “Joe was my one and only, and the love of my life.”

At this year’s Purple & Gold ceremony, we are honored to recognize Joe posthumously for his incredible contributions to our school. His kindness, generosity, and unwavering dedication to CBA will never be forgotten. His legacy lives on and will continue to inspire generations of CBA students. We are proud to have individuals like Joe, who are true reflections of St. Joseph’s legacy and continue to inspire us every day with their commitment to making the world a better place! The Christian Brothers thought highly enough of the values of Saint Joseph that they named him the patron saint of the Brothers. These similar values inspire us to proudly recognize Joe Leone with the Purple and Gold Award. Thank you for everything you have done for our community, Joe – Rest in Peace.

**Joseph Leone '68**