

WHY I GIVE BACK: THOMAS A. LEONARD, '70

BY JON CAROULIS

THOMAS A. LEONARD, '70, SAID HE couldn't help but notice how his accounting professors, such as Jack Reardon, '59, Pete Sweeney, '47, Walt Kaiser, and Joseph Markmann, '49, devoted so much energy to helping their students, not only during their time at La Salle but after they had graduated.

"They would help students get jobs," said Leonard, "and took a real interest in them post-college, and I felt I should do something similar."

And Leonard has done more than "something" in emulating his teachers.

Leonard is currently Treasurer of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, and he has served as a member of the Council of President's Associates and been a generous donor to La Salle. He and his family have recently held fundraising events to benefit a scholarship he and his family started in memory of his daughter, Danielle, who died during her senior year at La Salle.

One fundraiser was a baseball game put on by a long-time family friend, Jeff St. Amour, who built a ball field adjacent to his home (and used the same materials used by major league teams to build their infields). St. Amour provided an organist for music between innings and had an announcer, who did an impersonation of Phillies broadcaster Harry Kalas.



(Standing, from left) Jeff St. Amour, host of a recent Danielle Leonard Scholarship fundraiser; Jean Leonard; Danielle Leonard Scholarship recipient Heather Steacker, '08; Tom Leonard, '70; Tom Leonard Jr., '96; and April Leonard. (Seated, from left) Amy St. Amour and Kim Leonard.

"Danielle was a fabulous girl and student," said St. Amour. She had interned with him at Pricewaterhouse-Coopers "and we had a job waiting for her," he said.

St. Amour said Danielle had a keen interest in athletics, so having a sporting event to raise funds for the scholarship was both fitting and a way to "keep Danielle's spirit alive," he said.

Tom Leonard was the home plate umpire (even though he stood behind the pitcher). By the end of the game he had his "strike-three-you're-out" call down cold.

Between the baseball game and another event the Leonard family held this year, about \$45,000 was raised for the scholarship. The scholarship fund now totals about \$150,000.

Danielle Leonard, like her father, came to La Salle to study accounting (three of her siblings also graduated from the University). The scholarship in her name is awarded to a senior accounting major.

Through his efforts on La Salle's behalf, Leonard has gotten to know La Salle President Brother Michael J. McGinniss, F.S.C., '70, and James Ahern, '70, President of the Alumni Association. Ahern and Leonard were members of the same class but never met.

"I always tell people that who I am is based on the education I got, how the (Christian) Brothers cared for us," Ahern said. "They also taught us to let your deeds speak for you, and that's why Tom and others do things behind the scenes, doing things that need to be done."

WHY I GIVE BACK: ROSALIND WILSON SUTCH, CPA, '02

WHEN ROSALIND WILSON SUTCH, CPA, '02, BEGAN HER college search nearly a decade ago, she had a few criteria in mind.

The school had to be close to her family's East Falls home so she could commute. It also needed a well-regarded business program. Most importantly, as the youngest of 11 children and the first to attend college, it had to offer quality financial assistance.

"I was accepted at La Salle with a pretty sturdy financial package," Sutch said. "My family would not have been able to pay tuition. My whole college career was made possible through scholarships and being a (resident assistant)."

That is why Sutch, now a managing associate with Drucker & Scaccetti, P.C., wasted no time returning the favor. Upon graduation, she made a commitment to give back to La Salle University as previous alumni had done for her.

"One of the main reasons I give back to the University is because I want to give other people the same chance I had," Sutch said. "It made a big difference in my life, obviously. Who knows what I'd be doing otherwise?"

Sutch entered La Salle as an accounting and management information systems major in 1998. As a new student, she made the 15-minute commute daily from East Falls to attend classes at La Salle. Sutch said it didn't seem worth the added expense to live on campus, until she realized she was missing a vital part of the college experience.

"I commuted until I learned of on-campus life, then I decided to move here," she said.

At La Salle, Sutch said she never felt like an outcast. She met one of her best friends during orientation day and said simply maintaining that friendship made it worth going to La Salle.

"La Salle is a quality school," Sutch said. "I feel blessed that I got the chance to go to school here."

Sutch excelled at her major and joined several business honor societies, including Beta Gamma Sigma and Beta Alpha. As a junior, she became a resident assistant and got involved in community development.

During her senior year, Sutch attended a Network Night at La Salle, where she met with representatives of Drucker & Scaccetti, P.C., one of whom was a La Salle alum. The introduction landed Sutch her first job with the firm in January 2002, prior to her graduation.

"Education is the key to success," she said. "This was a huge achievement in my family. I'm trying to set an example for my son and my nieces and nephews, not to be the only one (to graduate from college), but to start a trend."

Today, Sutch has completed her post-graduate degree and lives with her husband, Jason, and their son, Matthew, in Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Sutch recognized that it was through generous donations of time and finances from other alumni that got her where she is today. She said she appreciates that La Salle offers financial aid on the basis of need and hopes that other students use this as an opportunity to set higher goals for post-secondary education.

Since 2002, Sutch has regularly donated to La Salle and now represents her firm at Network Night. She urges other young alumni to do their part by giving back to La Salle.

"Alumni need to realize how important their participation is, no matter how much they contribute," she said. "It's the community feeling of the school. ... I always felt at La Salle, everyone was an Explorer."



(From left) Mother Rosalind A. Wilson, Rosalind Wilson Sutch, CPA, '02, husband, Jason, and son, Matthew.



WHY I GIVE BACK: SUSAN ALTAMORE CARUSI, ESQ., '82

WHEN LA SALLE TRUSTEE SUSAN Altamore Carusi, Esq., '82, dropped off her stepdaughter, Kelly, as a freshman at the University two years ago, Carusi longed to return to campus.

"I wish I was going here now. It's so nice," she said. Carusi, however, has never strayed far from La Salle. Since earning her bachelor's degree in English in 1982, she has become an involved alumna and generous donor.

Originally from central New Jersey, Carusi was attracted to La Salle because it was in Philadelphia and had an intimate atmosphere. She joined Alpha Theta Alpha and enjoyed on-campus life. "It was a bit of an eye opener, as I met people of different backgrounds," she said. "I enjoyed my time there and it's nice to see how the University continues to improve."

After graduating from La Salle, she earned her MBA from Fordham University and a law degree from Fordham University School of Law. Carusi moved to New York and worked in the corporate financing area with Sequa Capital Corporation, Bank of America, and Debevoise & Plimpton. She later supervised and administered a Teen Court program at Glen Cove City Court in Glen Cove, N.Y., to train local high school students to act as judges, jurors, and attorneys for teenage defendants.

Despite her move to New York, Carusi stayed connected with her friends in Philadelphia.

As she became acquainted with La Salle President Brother Michael J. McGinniss, F.S.C., Ph.D., '70, and learned about the progress of the University, she felt compelled to give back.

"La Salle has such a commitment to educating those who might be the first in their family to go to college," she said. "I know what an education did for me and my husband. If anything is going to make a difference in a person's life, it's education."

Although Carusi's grandparents were unable to afford higher education, they stressed the importance of a college degree. Her father was the first in the family to graduate from college and her parents made it a priority to send Carusi and her five siblings to college. Today, Carusi and her husband, Bruce, have made the same opportunity available to Kelly and their three other children—Alison, Jamie, and Sean.

Among the many gifts she has made to La Salle, Carusi recently established two \$250,000 endowed scholarships in honor of her grandparents. Recipients of the scholarships are chosen annually on the basis of financial need. This year, two students received the Frances and John Jenich Memorial Scholarship, named for Carusi's maternal grandparents. The Peter and Gladys Altamore

Memorial Scholarship has been named for her paternal grandparents.

The spirit of education and service instilled in Carusi at La Salle also inspired her and her husband, Bruce, to create the Big Guy Foundation—a family foundation that provides academic grants to worthy individuals. These grants have helped college-bound students attend La Salle and other institutions that best suit their lives.

"The mission of La Salle and the Christian Brothers is to educate and to open students' eyes to the world around them—a world of possibilities," Carusi said. "The Big Guy Foundation is an outgrowth of (our) philosophy that education is the key to changing lives."

In addition to her work on La Salle's Board of Trustees, Carusi has attended and helped to coordinate alumni events and reunions. She also regularly promotes La Salle to potential students by holding receptions for interested families at her New York home.

"It's a nice opportunity to talk about the school and what makes it so special," Carusi said. "We all are fortunate enough to have had a wonderful experience at La Salle, and we can make sure that other students have that experience and lifetime opportunity that La Salle affords."

(Above, from left) Susan Altamore Carusi, Esq., '82, her husband, Bruce, and her stepdaughter, Kelly, enjoy La Salle's Family Weekend.