



Cast your VOTE for the St. Rita Catholic School Advisory Council Elections

Seven (7) individuals have committed to putting their name on the ballot for St. Rita Advisory Council ("AC"). This is a 3-year commitment. Please take into consideration, that the AC best serves the Pastor and Principal when represented by a diverse group of members capable of speaking to most any topic the Principal and Pastor may need assistance with. Each candidate on this ballot has something special and unique which they can bring to the Council, the Principal, the Pastor, and the School. With this in mind, please vote at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/stritaacvote>. Voting ends at 7 pm on Sunday, May 14.

Caroline Gagliardi would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



Adaptive Learning – To continue to research, understand and evaluate the best ways in which to leverage and incorporate adaptive learning, ensuring that all children at St. Rita are engaged at a level that is appropriate based on their current knowledge, ability and needs. Adaptive learning generally uses artificial intelligence (i.e. machine created intelligence) to customize the learning experience for the unique needs of the student.

Evolving the School Experience – To find ways to stay close to the evolving needs and wants of the students and their parents as well as to leverage best practices from other schools in the area and beyond. Continuous improvement and self-reflection is what will continue to make St. Rita the best school that it can be.

Spiritual Development – To continue the great legacy of spiritual growth and development. By assisting with continued consideration of new and innovative ways the students can learn to demonstrate their Christian values and social responsibility in their daily lives at school and beyond.

St. Rita Background & Experience

My husband, Brian, and I have three sons, Patrick (3rd grade), Thomas (1st) and James (Pre-K Fall '17). Our history with St. Rita Parish and St. Rita School began over 30 years ago when I attended St. Rita School (class of 1992). We were also married at St. Rita church in 2004.

I am currently a partner at PwC, an audit, assurance, tax and advisory firm, where I advise clients on a daily basis. The skills I have developed during the last 16 years at PwC are applicable to the Advisory Council as they include active listening, business analytics, critical thinking and problem solving.

Allen Klose would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



Marketing the School – To help develop a strategic and pragmatic approach to positioning and marketing the St. Rita School to current and perspective families.

Communications – To provide thoughts and advice on the specific types of materials and information needed to effectively market the school.

Enrollment - Identify any high priority areas of the school that need to be improved in order to retain and attract new families.

St. Rita Background & Experience

My wife Michaela and I have 3 boys ages 17, 13 and 8. Our family have been members of the St. Rita community for the past 2 years. Our youngest son William, is currently in the 2nd grade at St. Rita. We have experience (and perspective) with many of the schools within the area as our children have graduated through the various stages of their academics. These include: Jesuit College Preparatory School, Shelton, The Lamplighter School, Good Shepherd Episcopal School, and The Alcuin School.

I currently serve as a Senior level marketing executive with over 25 years of experience. Much of my work helps organizations grow by developing a deep understanding of their consumers and then designing the products and services that meet these consumer's needs. Past positions have included Chief of Marketing and Product Officer positions in retail and financial services. I currently working with Camelot Strategic Marketing and Media leading the team that provides strategic marketing services and purchases the television and digital media for TGI Fridays. I have Masters Degrees in both Marketing and Economics.

I believe my strengths in the areas of business and marketing can be leveraged by the advisory council to help increase the number of families interested in sending their children to St. Rita.

Alecia Nero, MD, MSCS, FACP would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



New & Existing Family Experience – To provide insights from a new perspective that can further support new and existing families of St. Rita.

Promoting St. Rita – To support greater visibility of the work and efforts put forth by this very special community.

Expanding what St. Rita has to offer - When possible, present additional suggestions for the development of new programs that can benefit all families and broaden the available opportunities for St. Rita students.

St. Rita Background & Experience

As a new family to St. Rita, I have come to realize that this community is quite special. My daughter, Morgan, entered 4th grade this school year as a transition from Montessori education. Our experiences with St. Rita and the Spartan Way are all new and quite refreshing.

It may seem counterintuitive that as a new family we would have much to contribute to St. Rita's ongoing development. However, I find that this is exactly the perspective that will help support the advancement of the school to gain diverse insights and experiences to further build upon an already successful organization.

I attended medical school at UT Southwestern Medical Center and completed residency training in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at University Hospitals Case Medical Center/Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, in Cleveland, OH. In addition to direct patient care and teaching/training the next generation of physicians, I have dedicated time to learning the different ways to engage families and communities across different backgrounds. Along the way, I have participated in many organizations where our work involves engagement in community service, social accountability for making tangible improvements in helping others, and volunteer efforts.

Marlon Cortez would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



Technology Roadmap - To help shape and implement a three-year technology roadmap that is tied directly to the school's goals (e.g. Improve learning outcomes, enable blue ribbon recognition, enhanced classroom experience and communication).

Parent Involvement – To champion projects that foster parent involvement that integrate with Dr. Everling-Walsh's strategy and vision for our St. Rita School/Parish.

St. Rita as a top Catholic School – To identify, define and support initiatives that continue to strengthen St. Rita's standing as a premier learning institution that sets an example for building and living our Catholic faith.

St. Rita Background & Experience

My wife Amanda and I are blessed to have 2 children here at St. Rita in 1st and 5th grade. We have really enjoyed and embraced the families that our children go to school with here at St. Rita and feel part of a very unique and special community that not only attends mass together, but also socializes with and supports one another.

My first volunteer experience at St. Rita started in 1995 when I delivered food and sponsored families as a part of our collaboration with AIDS services of Dallas. I am currently President of the Dad's club which sponsors many activities to foster fellowship with Dad's and families across classes and grades. This role has provided me with the opportunity to serve as a non-voting member of the Advisory Council for the last two years. It has been a great learning experience that allowed me to participate in discussions and offer solutions to areas ranging from fund raising, budgeting, technology and improving the St. Rita brand.

My business background is in IT consulting (where I met Amanda) and spent most of my professional career helping some of the largest companies solve complex business problems. I have extensive experience in IT Strategy, Business Transformation, Enterprise Implementations, vendor/contract management, Mergers & Acquisitions and large scale company turn-arounds.

Laura Biland would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



Communication – I would advocate improving the exchange of information between the school and parents by streamlining the communication process and consolidating information. Additionally, I would recommend uniformity and consistency among the teachers, such that information related to homework assignments, grades and upcoming exams are communicated through the same channels across all grades.

Collaboration – Effective parent involvement occurs when a strong partnership, based on trust and collaboration, exists between the school and parents. To enhance collaborative opportunities, I would support additional methods (e.g. WebEx, conference calls) and meeting times to allow for greater parent participation in various meetings and events.

Process Improvement – Drawing on years of audit experience, I would propose assessing significant financial, accounting or administration processes in order to identify potential gaps, provide recommendations and implement tighter controls.

St. Rita Background & Experience

My husband, Joe, and I have been parishioners at St. Rita for over 16 years. We have two children, Hannah and Zachary, who are currently in 5th and 2nd grade at St. Rita Catholic School. Our family is active in the St. Rita community, supporting teacher and classroom events, school fundraisers, volunteer opportunities, PSIA, DPL sports, and organizations such as the Dads' Club.

I have over 18 years of corporate experience in financial reporting, forensic auditing, fraud investigations and compliance. I currently serve as the Public Reporting Manager for Texas Instruments overseeing a team responsible for creating and publishing the company's quarterly and annual filings. Using my expertise in compliance, internal controls and process development, I would offer innovative solutions to help strengthen and improve the school's administration.

Jose Torrealba would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



STEM – To use my acute knowledge in ways that help make St. Rita's academics stronger, specifically in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Technology – To offer guidance so that the school can improve the way technology is used in the day to day operations of the school.

Catholic Education – To help offer guidance and perspectives that reinforce the importance and value placed on a Catholic education.

St. Rita Background & Experience

Originally from Venezuela, my wife Scarlett and I came to Dallas over 20 years ago and have been parishioners at St. Rita for 14 years. We have three children: Jose Luis Jr. (18, St. Rita '13, attending UT Austin in the fall), Yajunaida (16, St. Rita '15, sophomore at Ursuline); and Yuruani (8, 2nd Grade at St. Rita). We have always been very active in the parish community. I participate as a Eucharistic Minister and a Lector reader for both English and Spanish Masses. I have enjoyed coaching several DPL sports and volunteer for various school activities such as field trips and Field Day.

Presently, I am a Senior Consultant in NTT Data (Global IT Innovator). I have ample experience in Information Technology, including web development, enterprise and cloud applications, project management, and technology infrastructure. I also currently assist Ursuline with bridging the gap between tuition and actual cost as part of the annual Ursuline Fund Campaign.

Kathleen Thorson would like to help the AC support the Principal and Pastor the following ways:



Christ IS the Reason – Given the unbreakable ties between St. Rita Church and School, I would offer support to our Principal and Pastor to continue to drive home the message that our children are at St. Rita to learn the academic matters they need to prosper in our society, but also to foster the role of Christ in their lives.

Technology Roadmap – I believe I can provide insight into a sustainable technology roadmap that can support our teachers and students now, and as needs evolve in the future. I see that this is an area that must be supported by both administration and parents.

Empowering Students with Differentiated Approaches – I believe it is important to ensure that all students receive consistent support and resources from our school, and benefit greatly from programs designed to empower them and move them to the next level of development. I believe I can provide insight to ensure we are thoughtfully meeting the educational needs of both genders as they start elementary and progress through middle school.

St. Rita Background & Experience

While I grew up in Denton, TX, St. Rita has been a part of my life since early high school, when I attended mass as a student at Ursuline. Todd and I became parishioners over 20 years ago as we began marriage preparation, and later brought our two daughters into the St. Rita community, Lily (7th) and Josie (2nd), as they were baptized. We value the Catholic community that has supported our family for so many years.

I am a Texas Certified Public Accountant that has spent the last 20 years of my career in the technology sector managing finance, accounting, and operations. Being in this environment presented me with many opportunities to be involved in the community through United Way Grant Panels, Mi Escuelita Reading Program, Leadership Texas, and the International Women's Forum. Additionally, I stay very involved with my daughter's activities and their Girl Scout troops. I am passionate about empowerment for girls and women in our schools, communities, and workplace.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO VOTE

As you consider your top three (3) choices for Advisory Council, please take into consideration the Advisory Council's goal to have a well balanced group of individuals with a variety of perspectives and experience who can advise and support the Principal and Pastor across a number of topics including Marketing, Branding, Enrollment, Diversity, Financials, Communications, Strategy, Technology, Family Experience and much more.

The current Advisory Council members that three candidates will compliment next year are as follows:

Katie Riley – Director of St. Michael's Pre-School

Calvin Colbert – Sales, marketing, and operations at Challenger, Gray, & Christmas

Rebecca Rutherford - Attorney

Scott Ovenshire – Retired military

Carrie McFarland – IT legacy transformation at AT&T

Chris DeFrancisco – Banker with PlainsCapital Bank

A special **THANK YOU** to each of the candidates who so willingly stepped forth to put their name on this ballot because they feel compelled and committed to making St. Rita School a better place for everyone here.

~ the St. Rita Advisory Council

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