



"God is never going to be outdone in generosity."

It's an expression Jeannie Balinbin accredits to her mother. "She really drove that through, that anyone—everyone—has something to give, whether it's time, talent, or treasure."

It's one of the reasons that Jeannie and her husband, Dayton, have supported the Fulcrum Foundation for so many years. "I think Catholic education and the Catholic community are so important," said Jeannie. "We started getting involved because there were a few years that we needed a little extra help putting our kids through Catholic schools. Later, our life situation changed, so we decided to give back to Fulcrum a little bit every month. My siblings and I were brought up to tithe 10%—5% going to our parish, 2% going to the archdiocese, and 3% going to whatever charity we wanted. We think Fulcrum is important, that Catholic education is important, so part of our 3% goes to Fulcrum."

Jeannie's 10 children, now grown, all attended and graduated from

St. Monica on Mercer Island. Seven of her children went on to graduate from Catholic colleges and three later became educators teaching in Catholic schools, including O'Dea High School. Jeannie herself attended St. Monica for grade school, just as her grandchildren now do—three generations of family raised in the same local school.

"We have always believed that Catholic education is important and we're very grateful that our kids could go to school through St. Monica," said Jeannie. "The school has a fantastic principal who has really supercharged the community over the past few years. I'm really pleased by what I see. When I went through and when my kids went through, St. Monica made sure we were ahead in every subject, and I still see that today."

Jeannie plans to continue her support of Catholic education in the years to come. "I think it's important that we support Catholic education in order to teach Catholic values. You don't

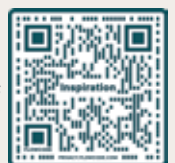
get that in a public school. It's good to know that we can have a Christian community to raise our kids in."

"Bottom line, I went to Catholic school and I sent my kids there. We needed a little help and now it's our turn to give back," Jeannie said.

To learn more about how you can join Fulcrum's Monthly Giving Club, visit FulcrumFoundation.org or contact Database Administrator Connor Kelly at connor.kelly@fulcrumfoundation.org.

YOUR GIFT TRANSFORMS LIVES.

Read more inspiring stories about how your generosity has changed lives at FulcrumFoundation.org/news/making-a-transformative-difference (or scan this code).





On This Great Journey Together

experienced Catholic education in Tanzania in 2007, working at a small Jesuit primary school.

“When I arrived home, I still didn’t know where I was being called,” Nicholas remembered. “I was hired by Our Lady of Fatima Parish School and I was able to blend my excitement for teaching with sharing my faith with young people. That’s what has drawn me to stay and continue working in Catholic schools.”

At Fatima, Nicholas encountered the Fulcrum Foundation for the first time. “I learned about Fulcrum at the first auction I was a part of at Fatima. The first item of the night was to raise our paddles in support of another Catholic school through the Fulcrum Foundation. Then I really got to see Fulcrum come to life at the Celebration of Light. It opened my eyes to this incredible group of people who are committed to Catholic education in this community.”

Nicholas soon joined the first cohort of the Leadership Academy, a program run in partnership by Fulcrum and the Office

for Catholic Schools that offers courses in managerial, academic, spiritual, and strategic leadership. Program graduates often become successful principals in local Catholic schools.

“I had just started a degree in administration, but this program was focused on Catholic school leadership specifically,” said Nicholas. “I can still remember the very first seminar where they told us to focus on the mission of Catholic education and ground ourselves in that before anything else. It really proved that the expansiveness of being a Catholic school leader is unlike leading at any other school.” *Continued on back page.*



Nicholas Ford learned early on that a good teacher can make an enormous impact.

“When I was in fourth grade, I had a teacher who believed in me. She was a wonderful teacher who taught me that I knew how to learn. I wanted to share that ability someday,” Nicholas said. “As I continued down that path, it was the ability to impact change in students at scale that made me keep coming back to the classroom.”

Nicholas became superintendent for Catholic schools in 2022, but first

A Long-Lasting Legacy



After 48 incredible years, Head of School and Principal Liz Swift is retiring from Holy Names Academy, leaving a legacy of strength, compassion, and hope.

“Catholic education is so critical,” said Liz. “It helps people be the best

they can be. It encourages them to grow their talents, passions, and interests in a supportive and collaborative environment where they can thrive.”

Liz attended Holy Names Academy as a student and returned as a teacher after earning her degree from the University of Washington. Liz became principal in 1995, but continued to teach AP Physics, her favorite class.

“Liz’s enthusiasm for all things math and science, in addition to being incredibly smart, makes her a wonderful teacher who has a positive impact on all her students,” said alumna and Vice Principal of Academics Marianne McGah. “Liz has inspired students to pursue further studies

in STEM fields through her own passion as well as by providing a strong academic foundation for students no matter what they choose to study in the future.”

Liz was also an inspiration for other educators. “She has served as a mentor to many emerging leaders. She is a principal that other principals and leaders reach out to for advice, and she has served on countless boards and accreditation committees,” said Marianne.

“Liz is incredibly respected in the archdiocese and the Seattle Metro League,” said Principal Sam Procopio of Bishop Blanchet High School. “She holds a leadership position within the principals and is always the quiet voice of reason. When she speaks, it carries great weight because of her wisdom and balanced, fair approach.”

“[She] is probably the reason that I am principal of Bishop Blanchet,” Sam added. “She made me believe in myself as a leader and gave me opportunities to lead at Holy Names when I was a teacher, coach, and administrator there. I have been at Blanchet for almost seven years

and every single day, I think about Holy Names and the positive impact it had on my life.”

Her mission-centered approach to leadership and exceptional service led the Fulcrum Foundation to honor Liz with the 2004 Archbishop’s Award. “I’m very passionate about resources for student scholarships and I’m so appreciative to the wonderful donors who have taken the long view on the importance of scholarship assistance,” said Liz. “I’m very grateful for Fulcrum and for what Fulcrum is doing to ensure the future of Catholic education.”

Preparing to step down, Liz reflected on her years at Holy Names Academy. “I’m most proud of our graduates,” she said. “I love hearing the good things that our alumnae are doing with their lives. It’s tremendously rewarding.”

“Center yourself on mission. Everything else will fall into place.”



Farewell to Conne McGlynn Bruce

Fulcrum bids a grateful farewell to Conne McGlynn Bruce as she steps down from her role as advancement director after seven years of compassionate, mission-led service.

Conne became advancement director in 2016, following the unexpected passing of Sue Mecham. With grace, strength, and determination, Conne stepped into her new role, building a framework that would bring record-breaking fundraising in the following years.

“God put me in this chair,” Conne said. “I truly feel that. But it’s the donors who showed up at every turn. Every conversation, every phone call, every email, every interaction, every Celebration of Light—there’s magic in that room because of the donors, because of the enthusiasm and the dedication of so many people to ensure that Catholic education is accessible and excellent.”



“We’ve witnessed Conne’s incredible work ethic and leadership to help Fulcrum reach transformational milestones, which in turn have increased Fulcrum’s impact on our families and schools across our archdiocese,” said Tony Audino, chair of the board, and Michelle Audino, Fulcrum

board member. “We are forever grateful and hope to honor Conne by working to continue Fulcrum’s mission. Thank you, Conne, for an incredible journey!”



Conne’s leadership helped Fulcrum through the *Uplift* capital campaign, which raised \$87 million, surpassing its original \$66 million goal. She also oversaw Fulcrum’s annual fundraising gala, the Celebration of Light, managing the event through difficult circumstances, including a snowstorm and the global pandemic.

“Conne was not only a champion for the students, families, teachers, and staff in our schools, but she was the energy behind our team that led the *Uplift* campaign,” said Shawn Hoban, one of the *Uplift* campaign co-chairs. “We could not have done it without her and her impact on Fulcrum will be felt for generations to come.”

“Our donors are so dedicated to this mission, as is our board,” Conne said, reflecting on her time at Fulcrum. “I’m proud of what we’ve accomplished over the last seven years together. We couldn’t have done this without the staff we have, without the board we have, without the schools we have, without

the superintendents partnering with us, without the community understanding that we are trying to move the needle and create a greater community for the betterment of the world. It is so much bigger than me, so much bigger than any of us.”

“Conne served Fulcrum and our Catholic community with passion, zeal, excellence, and a tireless energy that is exceptional. While the seven years she was with Fulcrum were not without challenges, she ensured that Fulcrum’s goals were met and gave her all to ensure our success,” said Vivian Shannon, executive director. “She managed her team beautifully and always had their best interests at heart. Fulcrum’s *Uplift* campaign was a huge success thanks to her leadership and dedication. She worked with three executive directors of Fulcrum during her tenure, helping to keep the ship afloat and eyes ever forward. Her legacy will be long-lasting and she will be missed. Our community, our team, and our stakeholders wish nothing but the best for Conne and wish her nothing but success in the future. Thank you, Conne, for a job very well done!” 🍀





On This Great Journey Together *continued from inside spread.*

After the Leadership Academy, Nicholas became principal of Fatima and, later, principal of Saint Patrick Catholic School. He became superintendent not long after.

"It's funny now to think of how leading in a Catholic school is unlike anything else, because being a superintendent of Catholic schools is also unlike being superintendent of any other district," Nicholas explained. "I get to share Archbishop Etienne's vision for our schools and impact system-wide goals, while also supporting the individual charisms of each school."

Reflecting on his first year as superintendent, Nicholas said: "I follow a legacy of superintendents before me. How do I ensure that our Catholic schools will be here for the next twelve superintendents who will follow me? How do we continue to form people in the faith, while elevating the gifts of our students in the classroom so that they can put their talents to use in the world? How do we continue to attract educators who want to set the world on fire, who want to inspire through the prism of faith?"

"We have just started plotting a course through our strategic plan for Catholic schools in the archdiocese," Nicholas continued. "When we talk about accessibility, we're talking about equity and access. Affordability is certainly a part of that, but we need to create schools that have cultures of belonging where everyone feels welcome, where everyone feels like they have a seat at the table. We need to figure out how we serve a wide range of needs in our students—academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally."

Even with more work still to go, Nicholas said he was proud of the progress Catholic schools have already made. "This mission—it keeps me coming to work every day. I believe in it, and I want to be able to work with and inspire another generation of teachers and staff in our schools."

"My goal is to look after families and create communities where everyone understands our mission and what it means—from the parish to the families to staff, principals, and students," Nicholas said. "We're all on this great journey together."



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