

M

Milwaukee's
Lifestyle Magazine

SPECIAL SECTION: EDUCATION

Live, Learn and Pass It On

THE AREA'S TOP EDUCATORS SHARE FROM-THE-HEART INSIGHT FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FAMILY'S EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

COMPILED BY MELISSA MCGRAW



Dr. Eileen Schwalbach
President, Mount Mary College

Schwalbach assumed the presidency of Mount Mary College in February 2009 after serving as acting president since September 2008. She has been with Mount Mary since 1993. Schwalbach has a doctorate in urban education from UW-Milwaukee, completed Harvard University's Institute

for Educational Management and The Harvard Seminar for New Presidents.

What advice do you have for new or returning students?

I advise students to immerse themselves fully in what college has to offer. Here that means not only our fine academic programs, but also our co-curricular activities like athletics, campus ministry and service learning. A true education involves more than just developing the life of the mind; the habits of the heart must also be integrated into educating the whole person.

If you knew then what you know now what would you have done differently? Students today have access to many more learning options than I had when I was in college. For example, study abroad experiences, unique internships and technology that can connect you to a global classroom are excellent ways to enrich your education. I'm quite sure I would have taken advantage of these types of experiences if they had been more readily available.



Dr. Blane McCann
Superintendent, Shorewood School District

McCann has led the Shorewood School District through the development and implementation of two strategic plans, developed collaborative governance structures, led several facilities renovation projects, and developed a student wellness vision while assuring continued academic excellence. He has a doctorate in educational policy and leadership from Marquette University.

What advice do you have for new or returning students? For all our students and my children, I say every day they should learn something new. I will ask the kids, "What did you learn today?" and they can't say "I don't know." Every day is an opportunity to become a better person.

What is the best piece of advice you received in school, and how has that influenced you as an educator and leader? My dad was an attorney and an entrepreneur. He said, "Ideas are a dime a dozen, but leaders act on those ideas." It doesn't matter whose idea it was, as long as it's a good idea that helps the school improve. When I was a school, the headmaster said don't follow fads; live with substance, humility, faith and tolerance. My dad also said everyone deserves respect and dignity. In education we see all different types of folks.



Jack H. Albert Jr.
President, St. John's Northwestern Military Academy

Albert has more than 28 years experience leading secondary military schools, and is in his eighth year as president of SJNMA. He is pursuing a doctorate of ministry for educational leadership at the Virginia Theological Seminary, and is on the board of directors of The Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States.

What is the best piece of advice you received in school, and how has it influenced you

as an educator and a leader? When I was 15 years old, I was asked to teach a Sunday School class for fifth grade boys. I did a good job and was commended for that effort. I decided I wanted to be a teacher. When I made that commitment I promised myself that I would never forget the pain and awkwardness of being a seventh-grader—I have been honest to myself about that and have always worked to encourage young men about their potential. It is easy to be critical, it is easy to ignore others, but when you encourage them they never forget.

If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently? I really have few regrets in my life. Despite mistakes and failures I have been given great opportunities. I would have liked to attend West Point, but I did not prepare myself for that opportunity while in high school. I proudly served our country in the Army, and believe I would have been a great officer, but maybe that decision would have affected other things in my life, like my family or the opportunity to lead a military academy. I do not want to squander the opportunities I have now to serve others and to teach young men.



Dr. Robert Solsrud
Head of School, Brookfield Academy

Solsrud became head of school in 1993, after serving Brookfield Academy for 22 years with tenures as head of the three divisions, Upper School biology and chemistry teacher, athletic director, and football and basketball coach. A Wisconsin native, Solsrud earned his doctorate in educational policy and leadership from Marquette University.

When you were a student, what were your best choices? What were your worst? I believe attitude is a choice, so I chose to really enjoy school. I loved coming to school to learn, to be with friends, and to participate in activities. I simply embraced that part of my life with a positive spirit. My worst choices were a few of my course selections, when I fell prey to the allure of easier courses over the rigorous courses. The decision to take less-demanding courses, while guaranteeing success and high grades, deflected me from experiencing the growth to be gained from more challenging classroom experiences.

What is the best piece of advice you received in school, and how has that influenced you as an educator and leader? I distinctly remember a meeting with my seventh grade teacher and my parents. I was pleasantly surprised when he said, "I think your son should go to college." His words of encouragement lifted my spirit, sending me on an educational journey culminating with a doctoral degree in educational leadership and the opportunity to head one of the finest college preparatory schools. As an educator, we should always appreciate the incredible opportunity we have to make a difference in the lives of our students. We should always remember that through role modeling and words, we can and do shape future generations. **M**