

Hello Alumni and Friends of the Bosco System,

My name is Jeff Keen and I was recently hired to head up the Development and Marketing departments at the Bosco System. I am truly excited to start working with such a generous and committed community. I know many of you may be wondering who I am, where I come from, what my qualifications are, and just what our goals will be for development and marketing in the future. I will attempt to answer all of these questions in this letter and want to stress that I really look forward to getting to know all of you.

The best place to start may be with a bit of background information about who I am and where I come from. I grew up in a rural area a few miles south of LeGrand, Iowa. (About 10 miles east of Marshalltown) I am the youngest of three children born into a Catholic family that attended the public school system at East Marshall. I was involved with football, basketball, track, and chorus for four years and enjoyed my high school experience. Thanks to my parents, I left for college with a basic understanding of Catholicism and a good moral compass. However, my only experience of a faith community my own age was a weekend retreat that I attended as a senior. Fortunately for me, seniors from Don Bosco High School also attended this retreat and it was there that I met my fiancée Ashley Rottinghaus. Ashley has been a constant voice of support and reason for me ever since and I cannot wait to marry her on October 9th.

As is the case for most people, the next few years of my life really shaped who I am. I spent my first two years of college at North Iowa Area Community College in Mason City where I was a first team academic all region performer for the basketball team both my freshman and sophomore years. As might be expected, I had a hard time finding myself as a Catholic due to my lack of experience and comfort within a faith community. I finally got myself on the right track in my last few months in Mason City and prepared for my move to the University of Iowa where I spent two years finishing my degree in political science and getting involved at the Newman Catholic Student Center. At the Newman Center I led retreats and bible studies, traveled on a mission trip to El Salvador, and served as president of the University of Iowa Students for Life. I spent my summers at a monastery in southern Indiana teaching basic Catechism to high school youth through the “One Bread One Cup” conferences.

After graduating from the University of Iowa, I was accepted as a seminarian and moved into the seminary house in Dubuque to study for the priesthood. After spending most of my summer waiting for classes to begin and praying on the decision I decided to join the workforce for a few years and rethink my vocation. I found employment with a development company in Cedar Rapids where I focused on fundraising for colleges, universities, high schools and diocesan appeals. Organizations I worked with include the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, the Diocese of Green Bay, Fordham University, the University of Detroit Mercy, Our Lady of Good Counsel High School, and Allentown Central Catholic High School. While I enjoyed my work at RuffaloCODY, I always felt that if I were to stay in development I would want to do it specifically for an organization that I believe in. The opportunity to do that presented itself as the Bosco System decided to add a position to handle development and marketing. Given my background in the public school system, I truly see a need to form children and young adults in areas other than academics. My love for the Catholic faith, along with my opinion that education should be more than academics, makes my position here at the Bosco System a dream job. I am happy to be here and happy to serve in a position that will positively impact the lives of young people.

Now that you know who I am I will try to explain where my vision for development and marketing at the Bosco System takes us. My first responsibility is to finish the Building a New Legacy campaign. This campaign has been very successful and helps lay the foundation to provide the finest educational experience in our area. I will be focusing on continuing to raise support for this campaign and ensuring that pledges are fulfilled.

My next priority will be to organize and plan all fundraising that is supplemental to the annual operating budget. As I understand the situation, we are currently doing several small fundraising drives throughout the year. Many of the community members I have spoken with have given me the indication that these fundraising drives get to be a hassle to organize and contribute to. I believe the needs addressed by these fundraising drives could be better addressed by establishing an “Annual Fund” that would work to supplement the operating budget of the school. The contributions that make up the annual fund would be used wherever the need is the greatest in the school, be it

technology upgrades or library acquisitions. This would be a great advantage for the School System as they would have these supplemental funds available at the start of the fiscal year and could budget accordingly. This would also be advantageous for the generous donors in this community as they would only be asked to contribute once per year to the fund. I believe that by concentrating our efforts more into this central location we can do more good in a more convenient way for all parties involved. As I discuss the possibility of an annual fund I want to stress that I do not intend to make any major changes without first discussing it with the community. I know there are excellent ideas out there and I cannot stress enough that I look forward to hearing from all of you, whether it is about your ideas for development or just to say hello.

Last but not least, we need to do a better job of marketing what we have at the Bosco System. As someone that is newer to this community I would really like to hear from all of you about this. For the alumni, I would like to ask, "What did you value most about your education experience at Bosco?" For the parents, I would like to ask, "Why did you choose Bosco over other educational institutions in the area?" For the friends, I would like to ask, "Why do you support the Bosco System?" As I get a better understanding about what makes this community so special to so many people I will be able to spread this message to those who don't know all that the Bosco System has to offer.

In closing I would just like to thank everyone who supports and believes in this community. In my short time here I have already found that this school system has something special and I look forward to developing what we already have even further. Once again, I look forward to hearing from all of you in the near future.

Go Dons and God Bless,

Jeff Keen

development@boscosystem.pvt.k12.ia.us

319-296-1606