

Jack '57 and Eileen O'Connor Parents Award

When Jack O'Connor graduated from St. Bernard's High School in Fitchburg, Massachusetts in the mid-1950's and made his way across the New Hampshire border to enroll at Saint Anselm College, he could not imagine how the education, friendships, and faith community on that campus would transform his entire life and the lives of future generations of O'Connors. Upon graduation from Saint Anselm in 1957, Jack met a woman with a name and ancestry as thoroughly Irish as his own, and when Eileen O'Sullivan became Eileen O'Connor, and the couple settled in Manchester to begin raising a family, you may count on the fact that all five of those children attended Catholic schools. Times were not always easy, but their faith was always steadfast, and no matter what, they found a way to serve and support Saint Anselm in numerous ways, including as faithful members of the long ago "Century Club." With his fellow Saint Anselm alum, Frank O'Donnell, Jack opened The Lamplighter Restaurant at the corner of Rt. 114 and Donald Street. The restaurant was a favorite gathering place during Saint Anselm parent's weekends and a regular stop for alumni making trips back to the hilltop. By the 1980's the next generation of O'Connors was ready to join the Saint Anselm community and Jack and Eileen became the proud parents of three graduates, Patrick '89, Michael '92, and Brendan '94. For six decades now Jack and Eileen have been regular visitors to the Hilltop for sports events, concerts, weddings and funerals, and this May, as the Good Lord keeps smiling upon them, they will come to campus to witness their oldest O'Connor grandchild, Maggie, graduate as a member of the Class of 2019. For their long and loyal love for and devotion to Jack's alma mater, for their determination to offer their children not just a Catholic education, but a Benedictine one, and for the special touch of Irish luck that they have brought to hundreds of Hawk basketball games and other special moments on campus, the Alumni Association is proud to honor Jack and Eileen O'Connor on the 61st anniversary of Jack's graduation, with its 2018 Parents Award.