

# The Dreamer

Exclusive news for the St. Joseph's Indian School DreamMakers



August 2024

## They Put the 'Parent' in Houseparent

*At St. Joseph's Indian School, we believe a family bond goes beyond blood ties.*

Part of St. Joseph's Indian School's mission is to create a nurturing environment where every Lakota (Sioux) child feels the warmth of a loving family. Whether it's through traditional family structures, mentorship programs or the extended St. Joseph's family, the children are provided the richness of connections that shape their lives.

A big component of creating this safe and secure environment is through our



Residential Program, which features 20 campus homes, each equipped to host 12 students.

St. Joseph's provides a nationally-accredited home-away-from-home for Native American children in grades one through 12. They live and play together as any family would. The Lakota boys and girls learn life skills from personal health and home finances to communication and teamwork.

All of this and more is why some families entrust St. Joseph's with their children — knowing they will be safe, loved and cared for in every way. We can't wait for our students to be back on campus in a few short weeks for another school year!

Our houseparents are a big part of the Residential Program's success. For many students at St. Joseph's, their houseparents and classmates within their campus home become their **thiyóšpaye** — *extended family*.

*"I attended school at St. Joseph's from '93 to '98. I still tell my children about Mike and Jean. They were my houseparents from*

*(over, please)*





*seventh grade to my senior year. I loved sports and they both supported me joining every year. Mike drove me to my games and back-and-forth to every practice and kept my dinner so I could eat after late practices. That meant so much to me. Jean showing up every year for my [athletic] Parents Night wearing my team picture pin for the Cubs volleyball season — those kinds of memories made me so grateful for caring people like them,”* said Destiny, a St. Joseph’s alum.

*“Every houseparent I had treated me with respect ... I really enjoyed the encouragement they helped me with,”* said Larry, a St. Joseph’s alum.

*“Even when I left St. Joe’s, [my houseparents] made the trip to my high school graduation. They were the best. I missed home so much, but they got me through it. They got me through a lot and I am ever so thankful. They helped shape the woman I am today,”* said Tina, a St. Joseph’s alum.

Receiving this kind of feedback leaves us humbled and nearly speechless. Some children may only spend a year or two at St. Joseph’s. However, for others, St. Joseph’s may be home seven days a week for years. This feedback is as much for you

as a DreamMaker as it is for us. Your **wačhántognaka** — *generosity* — makes the wheels go round on our campus and beyond.

But, keeping biological family bonds strong is also at the forefront. Houseparents send regular newsletters to parents and guardians about things going on in campus homes so they can be in-the-know about the opportunities their children are receiving. Parents and guardians are always openly invited to join their children during a campus visit.



Family is the heartbeat at St. Joseph’s Indian School. Every child finds comfort in the embrace of a supportive family, and together, we create a tapestry of warmth and connection that lasts a lifetime.

**Philámayaye** — *thank you* — for being a crucial part of our St. Joseph’s family, where love knows no bounds.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Preserving and sharing the Lakota language is a core part of our mission. Here are some translations:

**Thiwáhe** — *family*  
**Thiyóšpaye** — *extended family*  
**Iná** — *my mother*  
**Até** — *my father*

For more Lakota words and phrases, visit [www.stjo.org/Lakota](http://www.stjo.org/Lakota) today!



Dear friend,

Thank you for donating to our school. The main sports I do are basketball, football, and baseball. The classes I enjoy are math, science, and reading.

When I grow up I wanna be a Doctor or an actor. I want to live in California, because I want to see famous celebrities. The one thing I like to think about is basketball and tim.

I have been at St. Jose for six and a half years. I have two brothers that go to school here too. I live in the Rooney home. Thank you for supporting our school.

Your friend,  
Kansas



