

# The Dreamer

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



April 2025

## Student Butterflies to Take Flight this Spring

*Why are we thinking about butterflies this spring? Read to find out!*

We've had something on our minds this spring ... butterflies.

That's right — we have been thinking a lot about the **kimímela** — *butterfly* — for some time now. It's likely because graduation season begins in May and we are feeling nostalgic. Handfuls of children will receive their high school diplomas or eighth-grade completion certificates in the coming weeks. It makes us sentimental.

But how does a butterfly fit into all of this? While anyone can look at a butterfly and see God's artistry in its detailed coloring and overall appearance, the Lakota (Sioux) boys and girls are reminiscent of butterflies. They arrive at our school as young children and transform.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."*

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

As you know, a butterfly starts as a caterpillar — a curious little creature. When someone passes a caterpillar, they may first be taken aback by its juvenile form. Of course, they see it and know of its potential, but the sight of it in its beginning state is not something people appreciate like they do a butterfly. In fact, most people turn away from the caterpillar.

While people may turn away, the rest of the Animal Kingdom does not! There are many, many creatures and circumstances out to get a caterpillar. It's as if the whole world wants to swallow them whole.

Not only this, but then it must survive the transformation process of turning into a butterfly within its cocoon. During this process, the caterpillar literally digests itself, releasing enzymes to dissolve its tissues.

*"... the old has passed away ..."*

The only cells that survive this process are called imaginal discs. These discs then develop into the adult parts of a

*(over, please)*





butterfly — the wings, antennae, legs and all other features.

“... behold, the new has come.”

While humans don’t have imaginal discs for such transformations, we do have imaginations. Our imaginations produce our dreams ... as do the Lakota children at St. Joseph’s Indian School.

Children come to St. Joseph’s from all kinds of backgrounds and for all kinds of reasons. Like the young caterpillars, our students will overcome many obstacles before becoming butterflies. However, St. Joseph’s is the cocoon. We wrap our programs and services around our students with endless amounts of love and watch the transformations unfold. Most notably, at graduation time. It’s not uncommon for a student to be the first in their family to graduate high school. **We’re pleased to say St. Joseph’s has a 96% high school graduation rate — 10% higher than the national average.**

For students to reach their cap and gown moments, so many things have to happen. Even with St. Joseph’s, students must put in the work so the world doesn’t swallow them whole. They must grow to withstand temptations and be resilient when everything starts to feel insurmountable ...

And at St. Joseph’s, they do. We see our students, meet them where they are, and we do not turn away. As a DreamMaker, you

never turned away, either. Metaphorically speaking, you see little caterpillars and don’t look away. With your help, St. Joseph’s is blessed to be alongside Native American children for every step of this journey — this transformation — as they reach adulthood.

“... the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”

We’re indebted to our **thiyóšpaye** — *extended family* — like you, who give the resources to create this environment — this cocoon — for our students.

And now because of you, so many more butterflies are taking flight.

**Philámayaye** — *thank you* — for your kindness and care for the Lakota boys and girls at St. Joseph’s.



## DID YOU KNOW?

You can send a congratulatory card to a graduating student! An encouraging word goes a long way. Send a card to a Lakota graduate today at [stjo.org/graduate](https://stjo.org/graduate).



**St. Joseph's Indian School**  
We serve and teach, we receive and learn.  
PO Box 326  
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1-800-762-2162 • [www.stjo.org/Dreamer](https://www.stjo.org/Dreamer)







Dear Donor,

Thank you for donating to St. Joes.

I like my Christmas gifts and my basketball jersey's. It's one of the best Christmas gifts I ever had. In Math we are learning about Integers and how to multiply, divide, add and subtract them.

In World History we are learning about Rome and Ancient Greece.

In Science we are learning about Cells and the ice age and learning about Earth.

Thank you for the donation in the past few years and everything we have at St. Joes is mostly from donations from you and other donors. Thank you.

-Caden