

Liccardo Center was dedicated in 1966 in honor of SAMUEL A. LICCARDO. Sam was not a major donor to Bellarmine nor did he give a lot of money to the facility named after him!

Sam was, for almost 30 years the unofficial, unpaid lay development director for Bellarmine. In essence the very first lay person who did fundraising for any of the then 48 Jesuit high schools.

In 1948 Sam's first son, Sal '52, later followed by Leonard '59, entered Bellarmine. The school was in dire need of money just to keep the doors open. Sam took it upon himself, as a member, and eventually President of the Dads' Club, to be the school's unofficial fundraiser. What he did was call the then sitting president (originally Fr. Sugrue but eventually eight more Presidents during his time at Bellarmine) and TELL the President that that afternoon that they were going to the San Joaquin Valley....Tracy, Merced, Modesto... even North sometimes to Napa, Sonoma, Healdsburg, from where many of our boarding students came. Some of those Presidents were not always so ready to go with him, but he "encouraged" them to go in his own gentle way.

With a list of the names and addresses of the parents of the boarding students in a particular destination area, a map, a flashlight and a roll of nickels (the then price of using a public telephone) Sam and the president would call a boarder parent and the conversation went something like this, "Hello, my name is Sam Liccardo and I am also a Bellarmine parent. I just happen to be in the area with Fr....., the president of the school. We would like to stop by and say hello". Of course, they were welcomed and the President would talk about the student's progress and then Sam would close with an eloquent plea explaining the School's needs and before he left he had asked for a gift to help cover the full cost of their son's education! Thus, the parent pledge program was born.

Sam continued to do this fundraising as well as work on many other of the School's fundraisers such as the Golden Bell Dinner (the precursor to the Golden Bell Auction) until 1977 when the school hired Ron Pine as its first compensated employee development director. Sam continued to mentor Ron and the other Presidents until he was well into his 90s. He passed away on February 18, 2000.