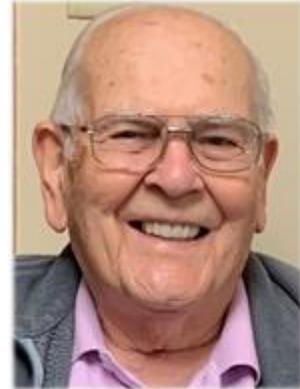


2021 Alumnus of the Year

Darcy Lapham '51 has been awarded the Alumnus of the Year honor for 2021.

He is part of what could be described as a “classic American success story”. Darcy and his nine siblings were born to parents of limited education and financial means, and each grew to success in their chosen fields.

At the start of The Great Depression, the Ruth & Alger Lapham family moved to Mt. Pleasant from Remus. They lived in what was referred to as a “tent village” on West Broadway Street along the River, where Nelson Park is now located. The Laphams were committed to their Catholic faith and their large family, sending the kids to Sacred Heart Academy even though paying the costs associated with parochial school was a challenge. Alger was a hard-working laborer employed at the local tire shop. Ruth ran the household and fostered a sense of responsibility in each child. Darcy gives credit for his personal success to his parents and his siblings.



After graduation from SHA, Darcy studied at Ferris State College (now called Ferris State University). He was a walk-on for the men’s basketball team after the Ferris coach sought him out on campus. The coach was also an official and had seen Darcy play in high school games. Darcy did not go to college thinking he would play, but he enjoyed the experience immensely.

Darcy lived and worked in both Florida and California before returning to Michigan to start several lucrative businesses. He and his younger brother Larry owned a carpet-cleaning business, a variety store, a lawn & garden center, and a real estate business. Today, at 88 years young, Darcy still goes to the real estate office each day. He also never misses daily Mass or the morning Rosary, even if he has to watch it on television because of the pandemic.

Darcy has unwavering support for Sacred Heart Parish and Sacred Heart Academy. He shares his talents and treasure in many ways, including donations for church building programs and annual activities, in addition to support for SHAgala and the SHA STEM Lab. Darcy recently funded 100 percent of a tuition assistance fund in the SHA Foundation called the Lapham Family Fund.

A devout Catholic, Darcy desires for all youth to be “on fire” for Catholicism. He also speaks fondly of all the people he graduated with, saying “We had a class of winners” fondly mentioning 1951 classmates such as Bill Sowle, Mary Ellen (Sweeney) Brandell and others.