



Jerry Keating '41 – A True Brothers

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Boy

When Jerry Keating graduated from CBS in 1941, “The world was a different place,” he says. “You have to remember when we were in school; there was enormous concern about the build up to war.” In fact, Pearl Harbor was attacked just six short months after his graduation. By then, Keating had begun working his way through college. Unfortunately, his education would have to wait.

“I joined the army in 1942,” he says. “Two of my three brothers had already enlisted. When my father found out, he was outraged. No man should have to risk losing three of his sons to war.” Against his father’s wishes, Keating went on to serve three years as a ground soldier in the South Pacific and 10 more in the reserves. Fortunately, all of the Keating boys made it home safely. Not all of Keating’s classmates were so lucky. “A few of us did not come home.”

Following his return, Keating was anxious to get back to college. This time, he earned his Bachelor’s degree at U.C. Berkeley. “My background at Christian Brothers in the sciences and English were critical to my success in getting through those classes,” remembers Keating. He then went on to earn a Master’s degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

As an engineer, his professional successes have been many. Keating spent 24 years with Aerojet-General Corporation where he directed the engineering efforts on a number of critical projects. He served as president of SKS Die Casting and Machining for 29 years and built it up to be a thriving domestic and international business with employees in Alameda, California and in China. Though he has since turned the company over to his son, Sean, Keating continues to act as vice president. “Sean is the boss now,” laughs Keating. “I’m lucky he’s decided to keep me on.”

“Jerry is an extremely remarkable and dedicated person,” offers CBHS classmate Stan Gilliam '41. “He’s been married 58 years, has a large family, and has built an industry. Through it all, he has always remained loyal to the Brothers.”

Keating and his wife Lenore married in 1949 and together have raised eight children, seven of whom are sons. With his strong faith and deep, abiding belief in Lasallian education, Keating made sure that each of his sons attended Catholic schools. “Three of the boys went to Christian Brothers. Three attended Mater Dei in Sana Ana and my youngest son, Christopher, went to St. Mary’s College High School in Berkeley.

“I’ve seen the results of the Lasallian educational tradition both in myself, my kids, and in many, many others,” says Keating. “The thing that makes it unique is the fact that it is a complete education. The kids develop academically, but, there is also the spiritual, social and moral development that is stressed as well. It’s so important that we provide that to young people in their teen years.”

Ensuring that education is available to all young people is a priority for Keating. He is a benefactor to both Christian Brothers and St. Mary’s College High School. He has worked closely with the Brothers at the Province and served as a longtime Regent and chairperson of the Board of Trustees at St. Mary’s College High School.

For his many years of faith, dedication and extraordinary service, Keating was honored with the special designation as an Affiliated Brother for the Christian Schools (AFSC) in 1999. “This really is the highest honor and greatest expression of appreciation that we can extend,” explains Brother George Van Grieken, FSC. “Very few people are given that distinction. In fact, in our entire District, there are only 10.”

“Being named an Affiliate means a lot to me and I am so honored,” says Keating.

“Jerry Keating is an all-around good guy,” says Gilliam. “And, since his house is on the hill in Moraga, he’s one of the luckiest, because he gets to wake up each morning to the bells of St. Mary’s College.”

Now that is truly the life of a Brothers’ boy.