



## A Tribute to Bob Capone '62 May He Rest In Peace

All of us at the Blue White Scholarship Foundation are deeply saddened by the news of Bob Capone's passing on Saturday, September 23, 2017. Many of our contributors have asked us to reprint this tribute to Bob's tenure with Villanova University, the Wildcat Club, and the Blue White Scholarship Foundation, which was originally published as part of one of our newsletters:

On November 2, 1992, **Robert J. Capone '62** became Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the then **Villanova Educational Foundation**, later renamed the **Blue White Scholarship Foundation**, bringing with him a unique experience gleaned over the course of more than 20 years of successful association with Villanova University as Assistant Vice President for Alumni Affairs. Bob came to the Foundation at a time of great anticipation, and brought with him integrity, talent and purpose. He very quickly made the Foundation's mission his own.

From 1992 until his retirement in 2014, Bob led the Foundation's charitable efforts, raising more than three million dollars, initially for the University's athletic programs, and, since 2002, for scholarships for Villanova juniors and seniors. The Foundation, composed of family and friends of Villanova University, is the only independent organization continuously supporting University programs over the past more than forty years. Through Bob's efforts, along with the support of thousands of loyal alumni, the Foundation is now poised to celebrate nearly a half-century of charitable fund-raising benefiting the University and its students.

Bob Capone's long history with the Foundation and the University began soon after his graduation in 1962. He was a volunteer, assistant varsity football coach and director of football recruiting in the University's athletic department for many years. He was therefore no stranger to the University staff, or to an incredibly wide circle of alumni, when he moved from the athletic department in 1980 to accept the executive directorship of the Villanova General Alumni Association. During his tenure in that position, the Alumni Association grew from 35,000 members to more than 70,000 when he retired from the University in 1992. With a special blend of ingenuity, personal involvement and determination, he had led the effort to organize alumni clubs across the country and in Europe, rewriting the alumni club handbook, and expanding the 20 existing alumni clubs and societies to an all-time high of 70. During his long tenure as head of alumni functions, Bob enlarged the scope of reunion and homecoming weekends and re-established Blue/White Weekend, an early spring festival centered on the closing of spring football practice. As editor of the alumni magazine *THE SPIRES*, the Association's newspaper was transformed, adopting a striking new format that included, among other features, a wider focus on alumni personal news, photographs, and a regular update on Association activities and plans called "From the Director's Chair".

In collaboration with the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Bob inaugurated the Alumni Medallion Award, recognizing the distinguished achievements of Arts and Sciences graduates at an annual black tie dinner. This award has now continued for nearly fifty years. Some of the distinguished alumni honored during Bob's tenure as Alumni Director included Thomas G. Labrecque '60, then president of Chase Manhattan Bank; Hon. Robert N.C. Nix, Jr. '50, chief justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court; Francis H. Dunne, Esq. '64, assistant General Counsel, General Motors Corporation; Sallie L. Baliunas, PhD '74, leading astronomer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics; General Paul X. Kelley USMC '50, Marine Corps Commandant 1983-87; Gerald M. Lemole, M.D. '58, internationally recognized heart surgeon; and Stanley A. Moore '62, a leading California developer.

Bob also initiated the first complete revision of the Alumni Association Constitution and its by-laws, and set up an advisory committee to the Alumni Association Executive Committee and a

liaison committee to the University board of trustees. He founded the Student/Alumni Association and the networking system known as V.A.L.U.E. (Villanova Alumni Lending Undergraduates Experience). He was also responsible for organizing the Navy/Marine ROTC Society.

The Villanova Financial Club was born of an unprecedented concept introduced by Bob and a small group of alumni from New York's Wall Street district. Chartered in 1982, the club, whose membership is limited to those Villanovans involved in the financial business, for more than 30 years has continued to be a source of significant support for the University, both economically as well as professionally.

In 1987 Bob helped to establish the Nursing Alumni Society and he had the distinction of being the first male ever named an honorary member. In 1988 he assisted in founding the Engineering Alumni Society, which today has more than 1,000 graduate engineers in membership. Until recently, he played a key role with the Engineering Awards Committee as they seek to annually recognize a number of outstanding Villanova engineers.

A special area of interest in which Bob has spent most of his adult life, is his own alumni/admissions advocacy program, through which he advised and counseled thousands of alumni and their children as they seek admission to Villanova. This special mission has fostered innumerable strong and lasting friendships with alumni and their extended families. Along with the Villanova football and basketball coaches, Bob perennially supported the various fund-raising golf outings, including the annual Jake Nevin Scholarship Golf Outing to fund scholarships for student managers and trainers, the Mike Danaher Golf Outing for athletic scholarships, and of course, the Howie Long Classic, benefitting our own Blue White Scholarship Foundation.

Even after assuming the Executive Directorship of the Foundation, Bob continued his involvement in the University community, as a member of the University Senate, the Pi Kappa Alpha National Fraternity, the college of Commerce and Finance Alumni Survey Committee, as a moderator for the Right to Life Student Association, and as a supporter of a number of student activities and organizations. He has been listed in *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*; *Outstanding Young Men of America*; and was a member of the national leadership honor society *Omicron Delta Kappa*. In collaboration with the Villanova University Department of Music, he was a founder of the de Pasquale Concert Series, featuring members of the Philadelphia Orchestra and world famous artists such as Yo Yo Mah, Emanuel Ax and Wolfgang Sawallisch. This concert series also included the Villanova Jazz Festival, when it was an annual spring offering on campus.

Bob's community service leadership was extraordinary. He was a chairman of the board of St. Agnes Hospital in Philadelphia, a former president of the St. John Neumann High School Alumni Association (where the former teacher chaired the business education department); and was a past president of the Central Delcom of the American Sons of Italy. He was also a member of the board of trustees of the Casa Fermi Retirement Home in Philadelphia and a member of the Patrons Foundation and the Comcast Cable Television Network. Frequently sought as a speaker at both University and community events, he was honored in both arenas, including "Man of the Year" by the St. John Neumann Alumni Society, and at The Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame as the first winner of the Jake Nevin Award.

Bob held a B.S. degree in economics and a master's degree in educational administration. He taught in the Philadelphia Catholic High School system for 13 years. As an undergraduate he was a varsity football player, a member of Turf and Tinsel, Delta Pi Epsilon Fraternity, the Villanova Law Society and the PLC Corps. Bob is survived by his wife, Frances, two children, Alexandra and Robert, and a grandchild, Robert.

***REQUESCAT IN PACE***