

Sometimes, [remembering where you've been is as important] as knowing where you are going.

## Keeping a Legacy Alive

In many ways, **Nick Marra '76** and his wife Karen are typical Padua parents. While Nick manages Sugar Memories (readers may recall our Spring 2006 story on this web-based candy sensation), Karen coordinates a full schedule of home and school activities for their four daughters (**Jessica '02, Lisa '05, Julie '07, and Lindsay '09**). With the demands of work and family, including tuitions, you'd assume the last thing on their minds would be the future of Padua Franciscan – but you'd be wrong. The Marras have chosen to support Padua in ways that may be of interest to other alumni, parents, or friends of the school.

The Marras first joined the Friar Club – while in their early thirties when their kids were still young – through a gift of life insurance. “It was an inexpensive way to provide an important legacy to the school,” Nick emphasized. “Karen and I feel that if you are in a position to help others, you should consider doing so during your own lifetime so that you can see how much of a difference you are making in someone's life.”

More recently, the couple continued this tradition by establishing the Art Pekar Memorial Fund within the Padua Franciscan Endowment Trust following the death of Karen's uncle. “My uncle lived a very simple life, dedicating his time and resources to helping the less fortunate,” explains Karen. “We felt that his actions reflected Franciscan values, so it was natural to keep his legacy alive through a need-based scholarship fund.” Karen's parents, Leonard and Ruth Pekar, expanded the fund, which the entire family expects to increase in future years. Karen



and Nick express a hope that their daughters can continue to honor Uncle Art's memory when they are older.

The desire to support Padua was planted during the '70s while Nick was still a student. From the start, he recognized that Padua was reinforcing the values that were instilled in him by his parents – how to treat other people, how to push himself to meet challenges, and live up to his potential. He credits teachers such as Tony Kaniecki and Wayne Miller with helping him to work through difficult times through their patience and understanding. Nick still has a special emotional attachment to Padua, which is

bolstered to this day through personal connections to faculty and classmates.

Nick and Karen are both thrilled with how the school has continued to evolve and improve, providing an even richer experience to each new generation. They particularly notice the increased emphasis on the Franciscan aspect of the school, which is not only taught, but lived. “Our daughters are each leaving the school with a good understanding of their faith and a belief in self that will help launch them into adulthood,” said Nick. Won't you join this strong tradition of giving by considering a current or deferred gift to Padua Franciscan High School? You can review information on these topics at [www.paduafranciscan.com/development](http://www.paduafranciscan.com/development). Your gift can be structured in a number of ways to meet your financial and charitable objectives. Contact Laurie Grabowski, associate director for Institutional Advancement, at 440.845.8224, to learn more. ♦

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*Nick Marra*