

LEO SEPTEMBER 2017 NEWS

More than 50 alums turned out at Leo on Thursday, Aug. 17, to welcome returning students back from summer vacation and welcome the Class of 2021 to the Leo Family. Leo President Dan McGrath '68 and Principal Shaka Rawls '93 were part of the alumni contingent. Here's the text of their remarks to the student body.



PRESIDENT MCGRATH WELCOMING REMARKS

Good morning! I want to welcome our sophomores, juniors and seniors back to Leo. I also want to welcome the incoming freshmen, the Class of 2021, and congratulate them on joining the Leo Family.

I want to thank all the alums for turning out today. I want the freshman to notice, to be aware that there's not another school in the country, certainly not in the city, that can get an alumni turnout like this on Opening Day of school. It's a reminder to all of us that we're part of something really special. And at Leo High School, you are part of something special.

Once you become a Leo Man, you're a Leo Man for life. All these guys, and thousands of guys just like them, are going to be your brothers. Think about that. You've got your immediate family and you've got your Leo Family, Leo Men who will be your brothers for the rest of your life. That's pretty special.

I'm looking forward to another great year. We have a really good group coming in, we've got a good group coming back ... with a couple of exceptions, and you know who you are (laughter). But we're going to have a very good year. I guarantee it.

The football season starts on August 25. That's a Friday night, and we play at Soldier Field. It's the first time we've played at Soldier Field since 1974, so it really is a historic occasion for all of us here at Leo. And it's a sign of what's to come.

Welcome back. Let's look forward to enjoying a really great year, together. Thank you, and God bless.

PRINCIPAL RAWLS WELCOMING REMARKS

The rules here are simple. Be respectful to your teachers and staff. We ask that you be young men, be Christ like in this building. We are entering our 91st year of Leo High School. That means we have been successful at sports longer than anyone else in the city of Chicago. We are the best school in the city of Chicago. If you don't believe that, transfer forms are in the main office.

We ask of you one thing, that you push yourself inside the classroom. This is an academic institution. We check your grades everyday. Freshmen, you will see me every single day. Sophomores: you know what it is. Juniors, it's ACT time. Seniors, it's time to go to college. This is a big deal. So I want you all to have the same enthusiasm that we had when we were getting the school ready for you guys. I'm going to tell the teachers to give you homework every night. You don't have to like it but you're going to have it. Right? You've got to get smart. And some of you already know that you're academically behind. So you have to work harder than the next person. You know we don't play any games here. We've got work to do. This is an academics first institution. Be on notice: If you're not getting the grades you will not be playing sports. It's about grades first. I don't care how good you are. I don't care who your coach is; you are a student first.

This is an academic institution first. Our job is to get you out of your parents' house, and into college. And believe me, you want to go to college, gentlemen. The joy of the college experience is your reward for working hard here at Leo. It's a big deal. We want you all to be prepared. So that means you have to work a little bit harder, that you have to stay a up little bit later to study a little bit more to make it in life.