

De La Salle

1910 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 1971

Cavaliers • Cadets • Titans

Need to contact us?
 De La Salle Alumni Association
 P.O. Box 380083
 Kansas City, MO 64138
<http://delasalletitanskc.org/>

COACH KOBETS' DISCIPLE, DAVE SULLIVAN, STILL LIKES TO WIN!

By: Pat O'Neill, '71



Illustration by Jim Murray

As a fiercely competitive offensive lineman for De La Salle's 1969 state champion football Titans, Dave Sullivan ran up against some pretty tough kids. But nothing like the street-wise youth he would be assigned to counsel and mentor at Godfrey Kobets' De La Salle Education Center, an alternative high school established in the fall of 1971.

After three years of college, football, and degrees in

Psychology and Guidance and Counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, in 1977 Sully found himself back in Kansas City with a wife and two daughters and no job. He went to see Godfey Kobets, who had co-founded the De La Salle Education Center after the traditional Christian Brothers' school closed in 1971.

"He hired me, then added one little caveat," recalls Sullivan. "I had to go find the money to pay my \$10,000 salary."

At the time, 100-150 kids, most rejected by traditional high school for fighting, drugs or truancy, were crammed into the old Christian Brothers' dormitory at 16th and Paseo.

"We had 14 year old kids who came in reading at second grade levels," said Sullivan. We had kids using drugs and alcohol and involved in gangs. "One of my students attacked an 80-year-old woman and cut her finger off to steal her ring. Kobe brought in the sinners, the lost kids," said Sullivan. "He was Mr. Second Chance.

"Kobe worked us like dogs, but it was a pleasure and a privilege to work with him and help him grow the school and his

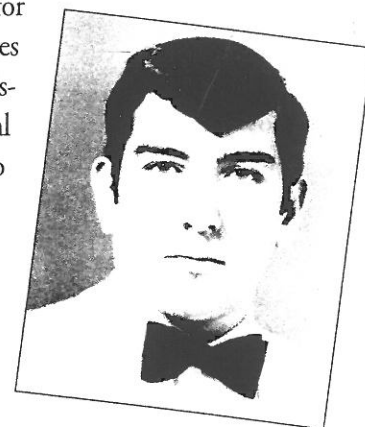
mission of helping kids who might otherwise be in jail or dead."

Sullivan became Principal of the De La Salle Education Center in 1988 and served in that capacity for five years. By then, the school had grown to serve 300-plus students, had already moved to the old Lillis High School complex in 1979, and become a national model for serving urban kids struggling to stay in school amidst lives marked by poverty and violence.

For nearly 20 years now, "Sully" has served as Executive Director of Kansas City's ArtsTech with a mission to better the lives of marginalized and at-risk youth through the development of marketable artistic, technical, and educational skills.

He oversees ArtsTech's center for youth enterprise at 1522 Holmes where urban kids receive hands-on training in fine arts and digital literacy and learn what it takes to get a job and keep a job.

"ArtsTech puts the kids first and we fight for them just as Mr. Kobets did," said Sully. "And, like old Coach Kobe, I still like to win!"



"ArtsTech has helped countless teens find their way in life."

The Kansas City Star

MEMORIAL MASS
 Thursday - April 5, 2018

ALUMNI BANQUET
 Friday - April 6, 2018

SEVENTEENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON CHRISTIAN BROTHERS
 AND TEACHERS "MAKING A DIFFERENCE"