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The happy side of a president's job—thanks Ruggers!

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Quad 136

Ruggers!

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The Happy Side of a President's Job—Thanks Ruggers!



Photo: Marc Williams

I am often asked, "What does a President do?" One of the important part of a president's job is to communicate with alumni and friends of the institution. (This blog is a small part of that function.)

While I am confident that we by and large have very happy and satisfied parents and alumni, it is true that the majority of our communications from alumni and friends occurs when they are unhappy. That is part of human nature.

But occasionally, someone will take the time to write when they are happy or pleasantly surprised by something we have done. These communications

are especially gratifying when they come from someone who is new to our community or knows little about us. The following came from the Director of Stadium Operations at a venue where the recent Small College Rugby Football Championships were held. Saint John's University won its second consecutive national championship, which was great, but the email below was at least as gratifying:

First, congratulations on winning your second National Championship title!

I want to thank you, and your entire team, for simply being awesome. I am always impressed with the etiquette and class your boys display when they are here. Yours is the only college team to have shown up with their khakis and club shirts on, something that is certainly never a requirement or even an expectation but it speaks volumes for what you are doing in helping shape future generations (truth be told, the only other teams that typically arrive dressed like this are the military teams that play in our summer 7s tournament).

Too, that your guys clean the changing room . . . STILL unheard of with any/every other team that has ever played here (our own team does not even do this)! I had to giggle when you said that one of the guys

said, "Coach, I can't find a broom." This, to me, shows a level of respect for our facility that we rarely, if ever, see. To top THIS is the fact that your SUPPORTERS always clean the section of the stands in which they sit. What?? Last year, they asked if we had trash bags for them to use (we told them "you don't have to do that, we pay people to clean the stands"). This year, they didn't even ask for trash bags. . they just cleaned up! When looking around the stadium at the end of the day on Sunday, the St. John's section was SPOTLESS (and I mean spotless ... someone must have found a broom AND a mop. Ha ha!), while the remaining sections were littered with trash (which is 100% normal). Just as teams never clean their changing rooms, fans most certainly do not tidy the area in which they sit. This is simply unheard of. . whether it is here at Infinity Park or any other arena around the world. I don't know what you guys put in the water in Colleeville, but I would love it if you could bottle some up and send my way.

You guys are awesome! Looking forward to having the team and the supporters back next year for your Three peat!!

This was surely a team effort—great players, attentive and responsible coaches and great parenting. I'd also like to think that the Benedictine tradition at Saint John's which emphasizes community and respect for all people played a small role. Regardless, I offer my congratulations to the Saint John's Ruggers for their championship and for the classy way they represented the University and themselves. You do us all proud.

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Michael Hemesath is the 13th president of Saint John's University. A 1981 SJU graduate, Hemesath is the first layperson appointed to a full presidential term at SJU. You can find him on Twitter [at] [PrezHemesath](#).