

# Getting to Know a Trustee: **STEVE SOMERS**

**SJC Brooklyn Class of 1982**

**Occupation:** President of Vigon International, Inc. in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

**Q.** How has your education at St. Joseph's College helped you in your career?

**A.** Like all colleges, it educated me in the disciplines I studied, namely chemistry. It also offered me a well-rounded liberal arts education. However, the game changer for me is the mentoring I received from my faculty adviser Sister St. Francis, as well as Sister Mary Maier. They inspired me not just to be good but rather to be the best I can be, so as to fulfill my potential and ultimately my destiny in this world. They gave me the confidence that I could achieve anything I set out to do if I worked hard and went after it with everything I had. They taught me not to be afraid of taking on something that may appear to be bigger than me. These words have echoed in my ears throughout my career and beyond a shadow of a doubt were the biggest professional influence of my life, and they ultimately allowed me to achieve my dreams.

**Q.** What advice would you offer up to aspiring entrepreneurs who are studying at St. Joseph's?

**A.** Anything is possible with hard work, an insatiable desire to achieve and ultimately overcoming fears that you will fail. I heard Steve Jobs once say we are born in this world with nothing and we will leave this world with nothing, so if we think we are safe or have something to lose, we don't. Make sure you have no regrets, so live [life] to its fullest, take chances,

explore, don't listen to others. Ultimately, the greatest thing in life is doing what others say you cannot do. True entrepreneurs drown out the naysayers and follow their heart. The dots in life will ultimately connect for you. To create something unique,

to develop your own legacy, to get up every day excited about the day ahead, to ultimately achieve your dreams — there is nothing like it. It's like winning the Super Bowl or the World Series every single day of your life.

**Q.** What is your fondest memory of St. Joseph's?

**A.** Certainly, my experiences studying chemistry and the sense of humor and fun realized in Sister Mary Maier's classes. She made classes like Physical Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry and Biochemistry a blast, while still teaching us a ton. I met my wife at SJC, and we began dating in our sophomore year, so the romance we started while in school where we had our first kiss outside the 245 building late one night (shhhhhh!) is also one of my fondest memories at St. Joe's.

**Q.** What motivates you to stay involved with — and to contribute to the success of — St. Joseph's?

**A.** SJC was the first to believe in me in my life, as they offered me the financial capabilities to attend college. I was the first and only in my family of six children to do so. I live my dreams every day, and I know in my heart this never would have happened if SJC did not come into my life. It is the least I can do to help SJC, but also pay it forward and pass on my life's experiences to other SJC students and those with financial needs, to assist them the same way I was assisted. ■

