

If you paid attention to what I had to say at the beginning of this Hall, you know that it is an eloquent set-up for what was to follow: the honoring of Paul Sugg by naming the dean of students position for him. Perhaps I should dispose of my humble personal tribute to Paul and simply allow the vast majority of you to scurry to the stage or to pop up in the audience and each do your imitation of Mr. Sugg. Of many of us imitated on this campus, he is the most imitated. And whether an accurate imitation or not, the imitation is offered with great affection and recognition of what is special about Mr. Sugg. Because he knows and loves us, we know and love him – rabidly and relentlessly.

I have known Paul Sugg since 1983. I was something of a griseled veteran by then, and Paul, well, he was not more than a college kid forced to wear a jacket and tie. He replaced my friend Chuck Farrington as the biology, sixie science and IPS teacher and, eventually, as head varsity soccer coach. I, like most of my colleagues, liked Paul from the start. He was warm, witty, eager, and affable. He was fun to be with. I know you will find this amazing but back then he liked to sneak up on people from behind and offer a Vulcan nerve pinch. STAR TREK was popular in those days, and Mr. Sugg had perfected Spock's imitable technique mainly used by the Vulcans to render unconsciousness by pinching a pressure point at the base of the victim's neck. Several unsuspecting sixies were paralyzed by this seemingly well-intentioned salute. It caused some problems: We did not have a nurse in those days; we hardly had a trainer. If a boy was sentient following the grip, he would not have had to lean in to hear what Mr. Sugg would have to say because Mr. Sugg's mouth was halfway up the hearing canal. He was and is a close talker. When Seinfeld and the writer Larry David introduced the concept to the nation, it was because they had attended a fraternity party at Hamilton College, home of the Fighting Continentals, and had encountered Mr. Sugg and this technique. It's strange, but we like it.

We like a lot about Mr. Sugg. He joined this faculty 40 years ago after having interned at St. Paul's School. In a strange twist of fate, we had already known his soon-to-be fiancée, Emily Stimson, who was a pioneering woman on the faculty, a wonderful carbonated French teacher, and our pal. That they would fall in love and marry was seen by all of us as a great blessing. That both of them were consumed by the RL way of life meant it was difficult to find a date for the wedding, but they did, and it was a raucous affair.

Over the years, Mr. Sugg has taught various levels of biology (sometimes it was offered to sixies, sometimes to sophomores, sometimes to seniors), as well as IPS to fifties and the Personal Development course to fifties, as well. This became a super Sugg experience. Of course throughout his time here, Mr. Sugg followed up on his own high school prowess as a wrestler by assisting with a program that routinely dominated the ISL and New England. (What better sport to coach for a gripper and a close talker than wrestling!) It was as the head varsity soccer coach, however, that Mr. Sugg found his greatest pleasure and effectiveness, shepherding his lucky teams to sometimes championship, often winning seasons, but, more important, ones during

which they felt the specialness of a meaningful, joint enterprise in which they honed and shaped their character and developed deep, eternal bonds with their teammates and coaches. Paul Sugg was able to ask boys to do hard things, and for them to like doing them.

Because Mr. Sugg had a loving, joyful childhood in his native Buffalo, he has always understood what it meant to be a kid, a boy, and the sense of play and occasionally mischief that he honed with his three brothers informs his understanding of all the boys with whom he has worked. So, too, did that empathy underscore his work as Dean of Students. Mr. Jarvis asked him to take on that often thankless job in 1998. In many schools, the person doing that job is a sheriff, antagonizing and punishing the students in his charge. For Mr. Sugg, the job was simply an extension of his teaching, coaching, and advising. Whatever heinous crime a boy may have committed, Mr. Sugg always preserved his worth and his humanity. He stood tall when it came to upholding the school's (and the world's) virtues, but he was always about building a boy up, never tearing him down. Indeed, as he honored the Biblical admonition, he always hated the sin and loved the sinner.

Finally, let's get back to that propensity for imitating Paul Sugg. Keep it up. He has and will continue to tolerate the somewhat nasal incantation and the utilization of the Vulcan death grip that mark your echoes of him. Best of all though, imitate Paul Sugg, the man. Faithful son and brother, devoted husband, loving father, and as of two weeks ago, grandfather, irascible colleague, fun loving friend, and beloved teacher, coach, advisor, and dean of students. We all pledge to be role models for our unsuspecting students. And we care most of all about what kind of person a boy is. Given that priority, there could be no better role model than Paul Sugg. We salute him and thank him.