

Three Generations of Dons

By Jean Follmer



Fred (1953) Charles (1979) Alissa (2005) Christian (2008) Tina (1979)

Photo submitted by Tina Skuce

Christian Skuce is a proud member of the Class of 2008 at Acalanes High School. He and his sister, Alissa Skuce (Acalanes Class of 2005), represent the 3rd generation of Acalanes graduates in their family. Their family's Dons legacy began with their maternal grandfather, Fred Ravazza, a current and lifelong Lafayette resident. Ravazza's father came to Lafayette from Italy to farm in Happy Valley and decided to stay and raise his children. Ravazza was on the football team during his high school career and graduated from Acalanes in 1953.

The Acalanes Dons legacy continued when Ravazza's daughter, Tina (Ravazza) Skuce, graduated from Acalanes in 1979. Tina played softball for Acalanes and met her husband, Charles Skuce, there. She said "We met in our junior year in Mr. Whyte's history class." They also attended the senior prom together. Like his father-in-law, Charles was also a Dons football player. When asked about his memories of Acalanes, Charles said "I enjoyed Acalanes and my friends and I enjoyed sports. It was a good high school." On being a lifelong Lafayette resident, Charles said "It's comfortable; we were born and raised here. (Lafayette) has good schools and good athletics." Both Charles and his father-in-law attended Lafayette Elementary School and Tina is now a first-grade teacher there.

Years later, the Skuce's daughter, Alissa, attended Acalanes. She continued her family's athletic tradition as a member of both the Acalanes water polo and swim teams. She graduated from Acalanes in 2005 and is currently a student at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo. Alissa began her swimming career as a Gutter Guppy for the LMYA Dolphins at age 4. She has continued the affiliation by coaching for the Dolphins during her college breaks. She said "I do it for fun now and to work out." Last year, Alissa competed in the AVIA Wildflower Olympic Distance Triathlon with her Aunt Maria (also an Acalanes graduate) and they won their relay event.

Alissa plans to return to the Bay Area next year and is open to considering further coaching opportunities.

Christian is off to Cuesta College this fall and will room with his sister, Alissa. Also an athlete, Christian played lacrosse during his four years at Acalanes and plans to continue in the future. He said "I liked the athletics and being part of the team. All my friends are on the team. I'm going to miss my friends." When asked if he plans to return to Lafayette frequently, Christian joked "That depends. Gas prices are pretty high and I don't want to push it." As for post college thoughts, Christian said "I thought about advertising because I have good commercial ideas or maybe a lacrosse company."

When asked if he would consider returning to Lafayette for the long run, Christian said "I like the suburbs more than the City, but it may be time to venture outside the bubble" to another suburb. Alissa cited her close ties to family saying "We were raised by our parents and our grandparents. If I have the opportunity, I would like to stay here." Their grandparents still live in Lafayette and frequently walk the track at Acalanes and attend sporting events there. Tina said "It's fun for my dad to go to the games." If Alissa has her way, Acalanes may be fortunate enough to have another generation of Skuce athletes in its future.