

# Comet Alumni Spotlight

## Ann Donnelly Gallinger Class of 1997



**Educational Background:** I attended STS and graduated from PND in 2001. I then received my bachelors degree from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, with a major in legal studies and a minor in business. I started working at Pekin Community High School and began attending Bradley University. I obtained my Masters in School Counseling in 2012 and my Masters of Leadership in Educational Administration in 2018.

**Recent Achievements:** I am currently a high school counselor at Pekin Community High School. This fall I will begin my 18th year at Pekin, where I have enjoyed working with wonderful students and co-workers.

**Family:** My husband, Rich, and I married 15 years ago this past June at St. Thomas (in the middle of a tornado, but that is a story for another day). We have a 6 year old daughter, Ellie, who will be going into first grade at St. Thomas. Rich and I have loved watching her grow as part of the STS family. She has experienced so much love and support from faculty and the STS community. We are very close with our family including my brothers (John and Christopher), my parents, and in-laws. We are fortunate to have a lot of extended family (cousins, aunts, uncles) who live in the area and play an important part of our everyday lives.

**Favorite experience as a St. Thomas Comet:** Some of my favorite experiences included our field trips to Maquoketa Caves and Six Flags, playing basketball and soccer, and getting to know so many lifelong friends.

**St. Thomas teacher who made an impact on you:** All of my teachers were stand out educators who had a passion for teaching. One that stands out was Mrs. Crawmer. She made learning fun while making me feel important and accepted, which can be a challenging feeling as a junior high teenager. She helped bridge the transition from grade school to high school and made me feel prepared for PND.

**Piece of advice for current Comets:** Be gracious for your education and thank the people who have sacrificed for you to attend a Catholic school. Your education is a gift that many people are not afforded. I did not appreciate what I had until working with people who did not have the same access to education and support that I had growing up. I still thank my parents for the educational opportunities that they both encouraged and provided to my brothers and me.

