



# SAINT JOSEPH COLLEGE

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CONNECTICUT

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## **Pomfret's Dr. Robert Smith Receives Honors at Saint Joseph College Arts Center Anniversary**



Pictured at the recent 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Carol Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities at Saint Joseph College are (left to right): Actor Chris Lemmon and his wife actress/model Gina Raymond with Dr. Robert Smith and his wife Janet of Pomfret. (Photo Credit: John Marinelli Photography).

WEST HARTFORD, CONN. – An Official Citation from the Connecticut General Assembly, a proclamation from the Mayor of West Hartford, and the prestigious Noah Webster Award presented by the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Carol Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities at Saint Joseph College. **The Center is administered by Robert Smith, Ph.D. of Pomfret.**

As the founding director of the Autorino Center, Dr. Smith has spent the past decade creating and presenting programs that have established the Center as one of the most sought after venues in greater Hartford. Annual dance, Gospel and Shakespeare festivals, and numerous college and community arts events fill the Center's calendar year-round.

The General Assembly cited the Center's "service as a valued cultural resource for Connecticut in fostering creativity and scholarship." The West Hartford mayor's proclamation noted the Center's "distinguished performing arts series featuring nationally and internationally known artists."

The Noah Webster Award was presented by the Chamber of Commerce for "extraordinary commitment to the West Hartford community." The award nomination cited Dr. Smith's "outstanding strategic leadership" that has brought over 270,000 visitors to the Center, and his work during the past ten years supporting the events of over 100 greater Hartford organizations held at the Center.

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in the Center's auditorium on May 18<sup>th</sup> was produced and directed by Dr. Smith, and hosted by actor Chris Lemmon, son of the late Academy Award-winning actor Jack Lemmon. The evening featured performances by Connecticut Concert Opera, Ballet Theatre Company, Connecticut Guitar Society, Connecticut's Irish Singers, Capital Classics Shakespeare Festival, and children from the National Dance Institute summer program directed by dance icon and artist-in-residence Jacques d'Amboise.

Video greetings and congratulations were sent by arts administrators and artists. Sandra Gibson, President and CEO of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters in Washington, D.C., the leading performing arts service organization, described Dr. Smith's administration as "a triumph that had connected higher education to the community." Actor/singer Franc D'Ambrosio, a record holder for most performances as the *Phantom of the Opera*, expressed that he had been honored to be a part of an amazing performing arts series that had helped him make "the music of the night."

Locally, Dr. Smith is a *faculty emeritus* of The Woodstock Academy, where he served for over thirty years as chairman of English and director of theatre. He is the author of *A History of The Woodstock Academy*, and was appointed School Historian by the Academy board of trustees in 1993. Two murals depicting the Academy history and painted by Dr. Smith are installed in the lobby of the Henry C. Bowen Building at the school. Dr. Smith is also a past president and honorary member of the board of directors of Theatre of Northeastern Connecticut at the Bradley Playhouse in Putnam. He lives in Pomfret with his wife of thirty-seven years, Janet Smith.

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*Saint Joseph College, founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy to provide higher education opportunities for women, is a comprehensive institution serving women from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. Responsive to the evolving educational needs of the community, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies also offers both women and men graduate degree programs in many fields, a Weekend Program for Adult Learners, professional certificate programs relevant to today's workforce, and other continuing education opportunities. In the fall of 2011, the Saint Joseph College School of Pharmacy, the first doctoral program in the College's 78-year history, will open at Hartford 21 on Trumbull Street in downtown Hartford. View our Web site at [www.sjc.edu](http://www.sjc.edu).*

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