



Parent Newsletter

From the Head of School

Dear SDA Parents,

This is the last issue of the St. Dominic Academy Parent newsletter for the 2015-2016 school year. It will also be my last letter as Head of School, as I am retiring at the end of June, 2016.

The past six years have gone by incredibly fast since I arrived at the Academy in the summer of 2010. Many wonderful things have happened during those six years. The installation of a campus-wide network launched our faculty and students on an exciting journey in technology-enhanced instruction. The STEM program, which we introduced in our 7th and 8th grade program three years ago, has been expanded into the high school curriculum, giving our students advanced opportunities in math and science. Our new building – Siena Hall – was officially opened during the last week of April and provides the Academy with a beautiful space for new programs and events.

All of these changes are exciting and strengthen the Academy's position as a premier academic institution in our area. Each year we have welcomed students from places farther away from Jersey City than we did in the past. They are coming from many places, drawn by our reputation for strong academics and a student body known for diversity in many areas – ethnicity, religious affiliation and economic levels. They thrive by being in a welcoming, peaceful community of learners, where each girl has the opportunity to find her own voice. As an educator with 30 years of experience in Catholic girls' schools, I can say with great confidence that there is no better place for a young woman to spend her high school years than at St. Dominic Academy.

It has been my privilege to be part of this wonderful school for the past six years. I leave the Academy with many fond memories of a dedicated faculty and staff, beautiful, smart and spirited students, and devoted parents who “believe in girls”!

Wishing all of you every blessing,

Sincerely,

Barbara C. Griffin
Head of School

A message from the Academic Dean

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As of early April, with temperatures hovering in the forties, it seemed as if spring would never arrive. However, spring has sprung and we are fast approaching the end of our 2015-2016 school year. While we begin the hustle and bustle of AP exams, graduation practices, and underclasswoman exams, I hope each of your daughters takes time to reflect on what she learned this year; whether it be a lesson in math or a lesson about friendship. Summer vacation will be here in the blink of an eye; a time that I look forward to each year, as it allows me and our other administrators time to prepare for the new school year.

We have already begun preparations for September of 2016. Summer reading titles have been selected and will be distributed to all students in the near future. We are offering some summer electives for credit this summer; these classes are open to rising 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students and will run from June 27th to July 29th. This year, we will offer Environmental Science for 2.5 credits and Film Studies for 2.5 credits. Courses taken at SDA during the summer will appear on transcripts. Guidance will be distributing more information on these courses and I encourage your daughters to take full advantage of these academic pursuits over the summer.

Thank you once again this year for sharing your daughters with me and the faculty and staff each day. As I do each spring, at this time I want to express my thanks to the parents of our graduating seniors. These young ladies have both shaped and blessed the lives of everyone at SDA with their kindness, their dedication to academics, athletics and activities, and their willingness all year to set an excellent example for each underclass woman at the school. I wish those ladies and their parents the best and brightest of futures and I look forward to working with the returning ladies and their parents in September.

Have a beautiful and relaxing summer!

Sincerely,



Sarah DegnanMoje
Academic Dean

NEWS FROM 7th and 8th GRADE VISIT TO LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER

The seventh grade class visited the *Titanic* exhibit at the Liberty Science Center on April 6. The class had previously read the story of this tragedy and viewed a video showing some of the artifacts rescued from the vessel. In addition, prior to visiting the exhibit, the students researched the lives of some of the travelers, prepared themselves to locate evidence of the kind of clothing worn for travel at that time, to view the rooms set aside for the various classes of people, and to analyze the warnings that could have prevented the tragedy from happening had they not been ignored.

During their tour of the exhibit, the students especially enjoyed being able to touch an “iceberg” set up to give them an idea of just how cold the ocean was on that fateful night. When the tour began, each student was given a card identifying a passenger or crew member. At the end of the tour, each student learned whether or not that person had survived the ordeal.

Classroom discussion the following day showed that the students enjoyed the experience and added to their knowledge of the *Titanic*.

HUDSON CATHOLIC FORENSICS TOURNAMENT

On Saturday, April 9, four seventh grade students (one eighth grade student missed due to illness) competed in the Forensics Tournament sponsored by Hudson Catholic. This was SDA’s third consecutive appearance at this event.

All the girls were selected for the final rounds of competition.

Results of the competition are as follows:

Oral Interpretation

A first place trophy was awarded to **Alyssa Fuentes**

A finalist medal were awarded to **Mia Eid**

Duo Interpretation

Finalist medals were awarded to **Lila Oranchak** and **Jane Eid**



A Special Celebration

On Friday, April 29, the entire SDA community gathered at a special 10:00 a.m. liturgy at Saint Aedan's Church commemorating the Feast of Saint Catherine of Siena. Saint Catherine of Siena, T.O.S.D., was a tertiary of the Dominican Order and a Scholastic philosopher and theologian.

Saint Dominic Academy is the first institution founded by the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell. The liturgy held on April 29 was one of the many celebrations taking place around the world this year as the Dominican Order celebrates its 800th Anniversary!

The Mass was presided over by Father Kenneth Letoile. Father served at Sacred Heart Parish in Jersey City for many years. He is presently the Provincial of the Dominican Friars of the Saint Joseph Province stationed in New York City.

It was also at this Mass that 25 new Peer Ministers were installed. They are seniors **Mackenzie Farley, Geraldine Lai-Ye Ho, Michelle Huertas, Elinor Mokaya**; juniors **Brianna Colletti, Alexandra Duran, Maegan Duran, Darlene Guance, Nailah Humuyan, Lauren Kelley, Bryanna Mendez, Kassandra Pardo, Pamela Reinoso, Maria Rivera**; sophomores **Valerie Cronick, Emily Gill, Marina Hanna, Alessandra Izaguirre, Raquel Lekic, Emily Menjivar, Amanda Russo, Isabella Trinidad** and freshmen **Cassidy LoCascio** and **Courtney Malden**.

Check this out....

For those of you who grew up in Jersey City and the surrounding area and for the many that didn't, this is a great site created by two students at New Jersey City University:

Jersey City: Past and Present: www.historyofjerseycity.org

You can find the specific history of Saint Dominic Academy at:

www.njcu.edu/programs/jchistory/Pages/S_Pages/St_Dominic_Academy.html

It's also been reposted on SDA's homepage.

Enjoy!

Siena Chapter of the National Honor Society

The SDA NHS was quite busy this spring. In addition to their daily tutoring hours, the National Honor Society sponsored a Green and White Tag Day on Saint Patrick's Day. A portion of the funds raised went toward hosting a breakfast for the Jersey City Fire Department Engine 9 Company Firehouse, which is located just up the street from SDA, at the corner of Bergen Avenue and Duncan Avenue.

On Friday, March 18th, the four NHS officers arrived early and purchased two dozen bagels and two dozen donuts, as well as cream cheeses. They timed their visit perfectly, arriving at Engine 9 at 8am, during shift change. The young ladies arranged the breakfast in the firehouse kitchen and invited those coming on duty as well as those going off duty to enjoy breakfast together. The young ladies even got to pose by the Engine before heading back to SDA.



Later that day, members of the NHS left school after 4th period to visit All Saints Catholic Academy in Bayonne. This visit was linked to Read Across America and our young ladies visited classrooms from Pre K 3 to Grade 2. Each classroom heard two stories, selected specifically for grade level comprehension as well as grade level Lexile levels and then did two projects; word clusters and Favorite Book Hats. Some of the titles read included *The Midnight Library*, *When a Dragon Moves In*, *A Drive in the Country*, *Bats at the Library* and *Bats at the Beach*.

On Wednesday, April 27, thirteen new members were inducted into the Siena Chapter of the National Honor Society. The event began with Invocation and a Salute to the American Flag which was followed by remarks of guest speaker, **Laura Barth '01**.

The Qualifications for Membership: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character, were presented respectively by current NHS officers, all of whom are seniors. They are President **Elinor Mokaya**, Vice President **Jennifer Valencia**, Treasurer **Jade Perez**, and Secretary **Taylor Brzowski**. NHS Advisor, **Ms. Sarah Degnan-Moje**, SDA's Academic Dean, introduced the inductees who then received their pins and certificates from SDA Dean of Students, **Sister Mary Lou Bauman**. All NHS members then recited the National Honor Society pledge. Closing remarks were made by Head of School, **Mrs. Barbara Griffin**.

The newest inductees into National Honor Society include juniors **Erin Bailey**, **Brianna Colletti**, **Alexandra Duran**, **Marina Ghobrial**, and **Yin Hei Lau**. Sophomores named to NHS include **Kateri Arano**, **Joelle Francisco**, **Emily Gill**, **Simran Kaur**, **Raquel Lekic**, **Stefanie Osorio**, **Nicolette Racz**, and **Amanda Ros**.



SDA Athletics Winter Wrap-Up and Spring Update

Basketball- The team concluded a tough season with a 4-20 record losing to Ferris in the County playoffs and Queen of Peace in the state. While lone senior **Gabriella Fortune** will be missed some promising younger Blue Devils are there to keep hope alive on the court.

Dance- Another stellar season for Coaches **Marie Maffia '79** and **Amanda Herring '06** capped by the girls' National and State victories in POM. **Teresa Cartagena** and **Barbara Jean McNutt** were named to a high level all-star team.

Indoor Track & Field- SDA which has always travelled to Rhode Island and Dartmouth for early season competitions enjoyed a wonderful thirty-eighth year of Indoor Track & Field. The team won the County relays for the 13th year in a row, finished second at the State Relays, won the Jersey City championship for the 30th year in a row and 100th time overall, captured the Indoor County championship for the third straight year and 11th in the past 13th. It was SDA'S 50th County title (which does not include the relay meets). The girls also defended their NJ Catholic Conference divisional championship and won the State Group meet (Parochial B). **Camille Bertholon, Malia Gray, Celeste Aurora** and **Jianna Bustamante** qualified for the NJ Meet of Champions and those girls plus **Brenna Nadrowski** and **Destiny Foster** competed at the Eastern States Championship. Malia Gray earned second team all-state status as a parochial (both A and B) High Jumper.

Swimming- what a great job our swimmers did this season! In two short years coach Trey McGraw has revived our once proud program to be a force we can all be proud of. The team won all six of their dual meets and finished second at both the Swimming Bees and County competitions. Freshman **Danielle Prekop**, a legacy student athlete, led the way but seniors **Keely Armitage, Amanda Gaccione** and **Kyra Gabinete** were invaluable. The team set a myriad of county records and did just a phenomenal job. While the seniors will be missed a crew of promising returnees and a fine coaching staff ensure that this season and recent resurgence will be a long term proposition.

Outdoor Track and Field - After an indoor season for the ages culminated by a Parochial B State Title, the Blue Devils have begun the spring in fine fashion. The season began at the 51th Colonial Relays in Williamsburg, VA where SDA had 7 top 5 finishes at The College of William and Mary event. The team first attended in 1982. Solid efforts have followed at the County, Catholic Conference and HCTCA Relays. SDA hosted and performed well at our 18th Annual SDA Leap Year Invitational. The month concludes as the team travels to its 36th consecutive U-Penn Relays in Philadelphia where they have medaled 14 times at a meet that began in 1895. May features championships for the city, county and state.

Softball - Mike Nieves' team is currently (8-6) with wins over Marist, University (2), Memorial, Lincoln, McNair, St. Anthony and Snyder. The Blue Devils have competed in tournaments benefiting autism and cancer research. The county and state play offs are in May.

Recent Student Accomplishments

Congratulations to juniors **Purnima Prasad** and **Aolanie Vargas** on their acceptances into several prestigious summer programs.



Purnima has been accepted to the Johns Hopkins Summer 2016 Discover Hopkins Program as a residential student. She will be spending 15 days within the campus focusing on laboratory research work. In addition, she received a Winston Data Analytics Scholarship and will participate in a NYU Summer GSTEM/Research Internship.

Aolanie has been accepted to the New Jersey Governor's School of Engineering and Technology to be held this summer at the Rutgers University School of Engineering in Piscataway. During the four week long program, Governors' Scholars will be taking 5 academic classes and completing an intensive research and/or design project in groups of 3-5 students, going on site visits to local corporations and meeting equally talented peers and professionals from across the state. Additionally, for the second consecutive year, Aolanie has been awarded a full scholarship for the 2016 Summer STEM Program at The Cooper Union in New York.

Seniors **Jianna Bustamante** and **Taylor Brzozowski** were recently honored at the annual Brian Piccolo Awards dinner held on April 20 at the Chandelier in Bayonne. Jianna, a Track and Field runner and Taylor, a member of the Dance Team, were each honored for their service to the community, academic excellence and performance out of the classroom



Recent Student Accomplishments.....

Congratulations to the members of the **Asian Interests Club** whose recent ANAK-TnK (Tulay Ng Kabataan) “A Bridge for the Children” fundraiser raised over \$2,000. The foundation was founded by a Jesuit priest in 1998 with a mission to serve the poorest children in the Metro Manila area in the Philippines. The event was co-hosted with St. Peter’s Prep’s Asian Society and was held on April 23 in the Maria Room of Our Lady of Mercy Parish. The event included dancing, performances, raffles and food.



The following students are the winners of the **Saint Dominic Academy 2016 Poetry Contest**. Each of these winners is guaranteed a spot in the *ELAN*, the Academy’s Literary Magazine.

Grade winners:

Seventh Grade – **Elizabeth Conaty**

Eighth Grade – **Andrea Zamarra**

Freshman – **Julia Murphy**

Sophomore – **Joelle Francisco**

Junior – **Christina Little**

Senior – **Christelle Candelario**

Of the grade winners, three students were then identified as First, Second and Third place winners from the Entire School and they are:

First Place and Poet of the Year 2016: Andrea Zamarra, “The Glistening Moon”

Second Place: Julia Murphy, “I Will Be Queen”

Third Place: Christina Little, “Poems are not Written for Ugly Woman”

Continue.....

STEAM Interaction: Linking Literature to Geometry Through *Jurassic Park*

In an effort to continue to foster the STEAM teaching initiative at SDA, students in the 9th grade Honors English class engaged in a joint class lesson on Fractal Geometry through their Honors Geometry class. After finishing the novel *Jurassic Park*, which uses analysis of the fractal curve and Chaos Theory to predict the disaster in the park, Ms. Degnan, Honors English teacher and Ms. Carr, Honors Geometry teacher, worked together to plan a lesson for the students, so they could create their own fractals, observe the repeating pattern, and then assemble a large fractal curve as a group. The hands on lesson served to reinforce the theory stated in the novel as well as give students an opportunity to create an image similar to the one in the novel.



Parent Association News

The SDA Parents Association would like to thank all those families who participated in the Calendar Raffle this year. We raised **\$26,055 net of expenses**. The funds will be used to install air conditioning in ELAN. So far, winners have been evenly split between parents of students and alumnae. Families who sold more than \$200 of raffle tickets were eligible for a separate raffle to win \$750 toward their registration fee for 2016-17. A parent of a current freshman was the lucky winner of that raffle.

Saint Dominic Academy Announces Class of 2020 Scholarship Recipients

Students who performed at the highest level on the Cooperative Admissions (COOP) exam who also had exemplary academic records were invited to take a special Scholarship Examination for the Siena Scholarship, a full, 4-year academic scholarship to Saint Dominic Academy. In addition, the students were asked to submit two letters of recommendation specifically addressing the significance of this scholarship award. The ten top scoring students on the scholarship exam were then invited in for an interview with Head of School, Mrs. Barbara Griffin.

Saint Dominic Academy is proud to announce that the recipient of the Siena Scholarship is **Claire Roake** of Nutley. Claire currently attends St. Thomas the Apostle School in Bloomfield. Claire is also a Legacy. Her mom, **Joan Moore Roake** is a 1983 alumna.

Emily Perri of Hasbrouck Heights received the St. Thomas Aquinas Scholarship, awarded at the discretion of the Head of School in recognition of her family's commitment to Catholic education. Emily will graduate from Corpus Christi School in Hasbrouck Heights.

Both girls will be part of the Siena Scholars program along with several other members of the Class of 2020 identified for their outstanding performance on the COOP exam and their excellent academic records.

Student Council News

On Thursday, April 29, the SDA community elected a new slate of officers for the 2016-2017 school year. The new Executive Board is (l-r) President **Lauren Kelley**, Vice-President **Alexandra Duran**, Secretary **Maegan Duran** and **Erin Bailey**, who will serve as Treasurer.



Saint Dominic Academy Summer Reading

Saint Dominic Academy has prepared assigned reading for all students in the subjects of English, Religion and History, as required. It is every student's responsibility to read her assigned books over the summer vacation. Assessments will be given in classes during the first weeks of school. It is advised that students keep a journal for their summer reading assignments, so they can look back on their thoughts and notes before school begins in September. Happy Reading!

7th Grade English

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin

8th Grade Religion

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, A Woman's Life

By Giuliana Pelucchi

8th Grade English

To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee

9th Grade Religion

Preparing for Adolescence by Dr. James Dobson

9th Grade Honors English

The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown

The Pact by Jodi Picoult

Cold Sassy Tree by Olive Ann Burns

9th Grade English

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time by Mark Haddon

10th Grade Religion

My Rock and My Salvation by Zip Rzeppa

10th Grade Honors American Literature

Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

An Abundance of Katherines by John Green

The Awakening by Kate Chopin

10th Grade American Literature

Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

An Abundance of Katherines by John Green

11th Grade Religion

A Mighty Heart by Marianne Pearl

11th Grade Honors British Literature

Rebecca by Daphne Du Maurier

Animal Farm by George Orwell

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

11th Grade British Literature

Animal Farm by George Orwell

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

12th Grade Religion

The Shack by Paul Young

12th Grade World Literature

Looking for Alaska John Green

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

12th Grade AP English

The Dante Club by Matthew Pearl

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Murder in the Cathedral by T.S. Eliot


Saint Dominic Academy
2572 J. F. Kennedy Blvd.
Jersey City, NJ 07304

Phone 201-434-5938
Fax 201-434-2603

Empowering Women for Leadership

We're on the Web!
www.stdominicacad.com

Follow us
@SaintDomAcademy

Copyright © 2014 (Saint Dominic Academy).
All rights reserved.

2572 J.F. Kennedy Boulevard
Jersey City, NJ 07304

Newsletter is archived on schools website:
www.stdominicacad.com

Andrea Apruzzese-Editor
Gaylor H. Wade—Design & Layout

Need to know what's happening?

The SDA school calendar is easily accessible
on the schools website:

<https://www.stdominicacad.com/calendar/>

Visit here anytime for up-to-date information