



SAINT DOMINIC ACADEMY

EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP SINCE 1878

Parent Perspective

Issue No. 1, September 2018

Saint Dominic Academy Recognizes AP® Scholars

SDA is proud to announce that seven members of its Class of 2018 and one current senior have earned AP Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP exams. **Emily Gill '18** has been named an AP Scholar with Distinction for earning an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. Fellow Class of 2018 members **Megan Dowden**, **Stefanie Osorio** and

Amanda Ros have all been named AP Scholars with Honor. **Francesca Guido**, **Raquel Lekic** and **Kathryn Moody**, all recent graduates, and **Hannah Dobronsky**, a current senior, were all named AP Scholars.

The Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) administered by The College Board provides students at SDA and other high schools with the opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school, and to earn

AP®

CollegeBoard

AP Scholar Awards

college credit, advanced placement or both for successful performance on the AP Exams.

EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS

STEM Standouts

Jenna Manzo '19, **Maryam Wahba '19**, **Courtney Martin '21** and **Isabella Trezza '21** attended The New York Academy of Sciences' Annual Global STEM Alliance (GSA) Summit, a three-day event in July dedicated to building a global community of science and technology leaders. Held in Manhattan, the summit brought together



GSA program participants from around the world, including many exceptional students who had the opportunity to meet their STEM mentors face-to-face for the first time. During the summit, the students were joined by representatives from some of the world's leading science and technology institutions and participated in engaging workshops, field trips and panel discussions on the future of STEM innovation.

Leadership Takes Centerstage

Claire Roake '20 was SDA's representative at HOBY (Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Seminar) in June. The three-day event held at Kean University included activities, workshops, reflective time, group time, a dance, a parents program and several keynote speakers.

According to its materials, HOBY's mission is to "inspire and develop our global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service and innovation" and has as its core values volunteerism, integrity, excellence, diversity and community partnership.

Excelling in the Arts and Forensics

Valentyna Simon '20 spent time at Wright State University in Ohio for a week of a cappella singing and then went to Westminster Choir College for two weeks of piano, music theory and classical singing. She is also now an official member of the National Society of High School Scholars. Meanwhile, **Maxine Rieder '19** was invited to attend a forensic science program at George Mason University in Virginia.

Introduce a Friend to SDA...

Saint Dominic Academy is hosting two **FALL OPEN HOUSES** in October for girls in grades 7 through 12. Recruit a friend—or three!—to see what SDA is all about. See Upcoming Events for details.

JOIN US FOR

Upcoming Events!



 **Sunday, Sept. 30**

Mother Daughter Prayer Service & Brunch

La Reggia, Meadowlands Plaza Hotel, 40 Wood Ave, Secaucus, 10 a.m.

 **Thursday, Oct. 4**

Financial Aid Information College Panel

7 p.m.

 **Friday, Oct. 5**

Annual Walkathon

 **Wednesday, Oct. 10**

Fall Open House

Tell your friends! 6 p.m.

 **Sunday, Oct. 28**

Fall Open House

Tell your friends! 1 p.m.

SDA Team "Fight Like A Girl" Making Strides 2018 Breast Cancer Awareness Walk



Welcome to SDA!

Saint Dominic Academy would like to welcome our new 7th & 8th grade classes, the Class of 2022 and transfer students to our family this fall! We look forward to getting to know you!

SDA Parents Association News

Let's Brunch!

Join us for the annual Mother Daughter Prayer Service & Brunch on Sunday, September 30, at La Reggia (Meadowlands Plaza Hotel, 40 Wood Ave., Secaucus). The prayer service begins promptly at 10 a.m., but we ask that attendees arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. No one will be seated once the prayer service has begun. A beautiful assortment of gift baskets will be raffled off and a 50/50 will be held. Mothers, daughters and alumnae sisters are invited to attend this event.

Tickets are \$35 and **must** be purchased online by Friday, September 28: [CLICK HERE FOR TICKETS](#). Please do not send any

money to SDA. Table reservations must also be submitted by Friday, September 28.

For questions, contact Jane Mattiello at (201) 852-2387, janemat@verizon.net, or Kristin Martin at (201) 725.7918, kristin.martin3@gmail.com

Calling All Volunteers

We are always looking for volunteers for the events we sponsor so we can enhance our girls' experiences at Saint Dominic Academy. Our two fundraisers are the Calendar Raffle and Designer Bag Bingo. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Maria Sasso at (201) 294-9465.

2018-2019 OFFICERS

MARIA SASSO
President

JANE MATTIELLO
Vice President & Secretary

KRISTIN MARTIN
Treasurer

JANE MATTIELLO & KRISTIN MARTIN
Mother Daughter Brunch Co-chairs

JOE ANDERSON
Father/Daughter Dance

GIGI DIAZ
Designer Bag Bingo



Noteworthy Faculty

Prayer for Our Students

Campus Minister **Sister Gina Scaringella** has a special prayer for this school year:

"My prayer for this year is that our students will grow in their awareness of God's great love for them and that they will preach this love through lives of compassion and service to others."

Sister Gina is a second-year novice with the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell. This means she is a "new" sister preparing to take vows in about a year. She attended Mount Saint Dominic Academy in Caldwell, so the Dominican charism of preaching and the witness of our sisters' lives have influenced her greatly. She received her bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and her master's degree from Rutgers University. In 2016, she entered the process of discerning a religious vocation with the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell. In 2017, she took part in the Collaborative Dominican Novitiate in Saint Louis, Missouri, where Dominican women's congregations from across the United States send their novices. There, she was immersed in the Dominican pillars of prayer, study, common life and ministry.



Author, Author!

English teacher **Mrs. Dena Arguelles** is now a Published Author, as evidenced by her maiden article on [webshrink.com](#), where she will be a regular contributor. She writes about Kate Spade's apparent suicide and the issue of mental health. Read her article [here](#).

Alaska Adventure

Ms. Eryn Lewis, fine arts teacher, spent three weeks this summer in Juneau, Alaska. She was selected to participate in a program by the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council. She spent time in study with artists in the area, learning studio practices. Her focus for the three weeks was wood carving, papermaking and printing. At the conclusion of her residence, she created a body of work that incorporated all of the mastered techniques and her outstanding artwork will be part of an exhibit. Anyone who has had the opportunity to meet our beloved Ms. Lewis is well aware of her talents as an artist, and not just at Saint Dominic Academy. Her list of exhibitions is extensive and includes many museums and other sites in New York, New Jersey, West Virginia and Portugal.

Welcome Back, Mrs. Ivey!

Mrs. Dorothy Ivey is delighted to be back at SDA. Now serving as an interim French teacher, Mrs. Ivey first started teaching here in 2007. She stayed at SDA for five years, until June 2012, but remained after that to help with production of *The Wizard of Oz*, which opened in late 2012. She said, "It was an impossibly difficult decision to leave the girls, my colleagues and my career, but I was about to begin the greatest adventure of my life. My daughter, Ava, was born December 26, 2012. Last week, Ava started

kindergarten and I found myself with time to fill and love to give. I reached out to Mrs. Farrales to let her know of my availability, in case SDA should ever need a hand with anything. As fate would have it, they did! I am incredibly excited to be back in the classroom, doing what I love, and back at Saint Dominic Academy—because after all, there truly is no place like home."

More New Faculty Faces

Mr. Christopher Amnott is a new English teacher and tennis coach at SDA. Mr. Amnott earned a Bachelor of Arts at Seton Hall University (SHU) in 2015 with concentrations in English literature and American history, as well as an MA in English literature from SHU in 2017. Originally from Southington, Conn., he said, "I am thrilled to be part of the SDA community."

Mr. Toni Garabete has joined the faculty as a French teacher. Born in Aleppo, Syria, he moved to Lebanon, but returned to Aleppo for his high school and college studies. After earning his bachelor's degree, he continued his studies at the University of Lyon II Lumiere in France, obtaining a master's degree and a D.E.A., as well as a doctorate, before beginning a career as a French teacher in Venezuela. At the University Simón Bolívar (U.S.B.), he was a professor of French as a foreign language (F.L.E.), creating the Chair of Arab Culture at U.S.B and co-founding the Oriental Studies Institute. Mr. Garabete has attended (F.L.E.) courses in France in Lyon, Grenoble, Nantes, Vichy and Paris, as well as in Laval, Quebec. He is pleased to now put all of his training and experience to work to offer Saint Dominic Academy students a fast and efficient means to learn the French language.



BLUE DEVIL PRIDE



Saint Dominic Academy Senior Named Scholastic All-American

Danielle Prekop '19 has been named to the USA Swimming Scholastic All-American Team for 2017-2018. A swimmer must have achieved a USA Swimming Winter Junior National Time cut. Danielle qualified in the 200 breaststroke with a SCY time of 2:19.79. Additionally, the student must finish the academic year with a GPA of at least 3.5, take honors or AP classes and have no grade lower than C.

Further congratulations are in order as on September 20, Danielle verbally committed to attend Lehigh University

Cross Country Shoots for State Meet

The program, completing its 40th year, had a nice summer, with the girls starting their summer running program on June 26. The nucleus of last year's championship (Jersey City/South Hudson/Eastern Christian /County) team returns as the Blue Devils attempt to qualify for a second consecutive NJ State Meet of Champions berth, which would be the program's 8th. As always, the schedule will be challenging and includes a race at Disney, where the awards have an objective criteria, time. The Blue Devils were 2nd in Florida a year ago. The season began on September 15 with approximately 25 schools—many of New Jersey's best—at Lincoln Park for the 24th annual Saint Dominic Academy Invitational. Congratulations go out to **Coach John Nagel**, named the NFHS Coaches Association's State Coach of the Year for 2017-18 in Girls Indoor Track. In addition to Mr. Nagel, other cross country coaches are **Mr. Patrick McMonagle**, **Dr. Kristina Jimenez '09** and **Ms. Mariel Teschlog '07**.

Tennis Starts Strong

New coach **Mr. Chris Amnott** has brought enthusiasm and playing experience to our netters. He replaces the veteran staff of Marilyn and Clare Wilson, who shared their talents with the SDA girls for 14 years. The team began the Amnott era with a shutout win over Dickinson and they hope to improve on last year's record and post a winning ledger.

On the Pitch

Soccer coach **Mr. Jorge Hernandez** and his squad hope to eclipse last year's 10-win season and achieve a winning record.

Volleyball Update

Veteran coach **Mr. Michael Kushnir** leads the Blue Devils into 2018 with the hope of improving on last season's efforts, despite losing some key players. In addition to the regular season matches, the team will compete in a tournament in Harrison.



Coaching Vacancies

Saint Dominic Academy is currently trying to fill coaching vacancies in swimming and softball. If you are aware of any qualified candidates, please direct them to **Mr. John E. Nagel**, Director of Athletics, (201) 401-7394.

Cheer on the Blue Devils!

Show your Blue Devil pride at a game, race or match. The schedules for all fall sports can be found on the school's calendar on the website.

LETTERS

A Message from the Head of School

Dear Parents:

Welcome back to what will truly be a wonderful 140th Anniversary Year at Saint Dominic Academy!

This year, as we prepare to celebrate the 140th anniversary of the school, the 20th anniversary of our Leadership Gala and most special to our faculty, the 40th anniversary of Mr. Joe Napoli's dedication to education here at SDA, I wanted our theme for the school year to embrace the idea that work should not only be a place where we are productive and content, but a place where we come together with teachers and students, parents and administrators and find ourselves, at different moments on varying days, being truly happy.

I recognize that there are some days here at SDA where it is very easy for us to come together and be truly happy as a team---December 14, when we break for Christmas is one of those days for certain, this year the culmination of our Middle States Visit on October 18th will be another one for sure. However, what about all the other days...the rainy Mondays, the snowy Thursday afternoons, the randomly hot and humid day in early May where we each long to be at the beach instead of the blackboard? How can I, as Head of School and each of you as loyal members of the Saint Dominic Academy community, work to find happiness on those tough days?

The answer is simple, it's sweet, and of course knowing me it should come as no surprise that it comes from a Disney film. Our theme for this year, one that I ask you to embrace with your heart, mind and soul is

You must find happiness where you are!
– Moana

And so, I challenge each of you to, once a week, jot down a pink thought filled with happiness.... Each one of us has chosen to spend the upcoming school year together, with each other at Saint Dominic Academy. And so, let us go into the school year finding the happiness that comes from that choice, the happiness that comes from knowing we are shaping the future for young women, and the happiness that lights up within each of us as we work together to make our school the best place it can possibly be.

With warm prayers,

Ms. Sarah Degnan
Head of School



LETTERS

A Message from the Academic Dean

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year, my 10th year as a teacher and third as Academic Dean at Saint Dominic Academy. I am not exaggerating when I say that I have never been more excited to start a new school year as I am now. Yes, the challenges do seem to get tougher, but then, don't the "tough get going when the going gets rough?" As parents in this millennial age, I know that you know exactly what I am talking about. What continues to inspire me, though, are you and your daughters, and the trust and confidence that you continue to graciously place in SDA! Back-to-School Night last September 13 was evidence of such. Thank you for simply being happy with us!

On September 6, a day before school started, SDA faculty, staff and administration attended a Spirituality Day at Caldwell. Our speaker was Dr. Nancy Blattner, President of Caldwell University. Boy, did she provide that "rev on the engine" we needed for a great start...a going back to the basics of what differentiates SDA from most schools, i.e., the wonderful truth that we have a God whom we can partner with in this ministry of educating and empowering young women for leadership.

Dr. Blattner summarized how she deals with stress, anxiety and life's unexpected turns via the following:

- 1) Start and end each day with prayer.
- 2) Create a sacred place where you can talk with God.
- 3) Repeat a short prayer or mantra throughout the day.
- 4) Keep a journal.
- 5) Find someone with whom to pray and/or reflect as often as possible.

She ended with the following verses from Matthew 6:25-34: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

In all humility, my dear parents, the above is what enables and sustains me on a daily basis. My confidence and competence stem from a personal and intimate

relationship with Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. My mantra is from Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." This is what I bring to the table. This explains why I truly love what I do and why it is my sheer joy to be of service to you and your daughters. Please do let them know that I am available to be that someone for number 5 above.

Trusting in our heavenly Father's all-sufficient grace for a great school year 2018-2019, in Jesus' name!

Mrs. Guen Farrales
Academic Dean

A Message from the 7th and 8th Grade Coordinator

Summer days are for relaxing, following a different schedule or having no schedule at all. They give us a chance to step back and enjoy the longer days and all the exciting adventures that summer's lazy, hazy days have to offer. Labor Day has come and gone. Our summer days have slipped away, and while it may sadden us to see summer leave, we are excited by the beginning of a new school year. We look to the future with a sense of enthusiasm and anticipation. Students especially wonder about their futures and what they might hold for them. Sometimes they leave their futures to chance and hope that fate will be kind and generous to them.

I recently read a statement by President Abraham Lincoln that may seem appropriate at this time. In speaking of the future, President Lincoln offered this observation: "The best way to predict the future is to create it." As students continue their academic careers this year at Saint Dominic Academy, these words of President Lincoln are certainly worthy of consideration.

Every class, every assignment, every success and even every setback is a preparation for the future. With that in mind, students in grades seven through 12 may consider the following:

- What goals have I set for myself?
- How much time and energy am I willing to invest in my studies?
- Do I have a positive attitude?
- How will I contribute to the Saint Dominic Academy community?
- What activities will I undertake?
- How will I reach out to others?

No one can predict the future, but so much of your future depends on what you do to prepare for it. Today is a good day to begin!

I wish all of you a year filled with blessings, happiness and success.

Sincerely,
Ms. Mary Ann McLean
Seventh and Eighth Grade Coordinator