

Parent Perspective

Issue No. 3, June 2019

Saint Dominic Academy holds 141st Commencement Exercises

On Sunday, June 2, Saint Dominic Academy held its 141st commencement exercises for the Class of 2019. Ms. Sarah Degnan Moje, Head of School, presided over the event held at 3:00 p.m. at St. Aedan's, the Saint Peter's University Church on Bergen Avenue. A Baccalaureate Mass and dinner were held on Wednesday, May 29 at St. Aedan's Church and the Saint Peter's University MacMahon Student Center respectively.

The 67 members of the Class of 2019 were collectively awarded \$13,007,189 in college scholarship and grant monies. Class valedictorian Hannah Dobronsky addressed those gathered at St. Aedan's Church. President of the National Honor Society, and a member of Student Ambassadors, Spanish Honor Society and Glee Club, Hannah received the Science award for having achieved



the highest cumulative average in that subject. She will attend Stevens Institute of Technology in the fall.

Class salutatorian, Skye Archibald, who gave her address at the Baccalaureate Mass, did a reflective reading of "Your Day Has Arrived,"

by Kelly Roper. Skye, a member of National Honor Society and French National Honor Society, has been a member of the student body since 2012 when she joined the Academy's

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Gearing Up for An Exciting Summer!

Several SDA students will be participating in a variety of very prestigious programs this summer.

Alyssa Fuentes '21 will be SDA's representative to HOBY, the Hugh O'Brien Leadership Seminar to be held at Kean University from June 6-9. In July, Alyssa will head to Northwestern University in Chicago to participate in an Engineering program sponsored by the National Student Leadership Conference.

Courtney Martin '21 will be spending a week at The George Washington University in Washington DC in the GW Pre-College Program: Crime Scene Investigation.

From June 9-14, **Logan Hart '20** will be attending The United States Naval Academy Summer Seminar. According to their information, "the United States Naval Academy is the first step in navigating a future to becoming one of the nation's next generation of leaders". Logan will spend six days at the

Academy. She will live in Bancroft Hall, experience life on The Yard and learn from some of the Naval Academy's best midshipmen and most esteemed professors.

Veronica Dominguez '20 was accepted to the Summer Service Scholars Program at The College of New Jersey. She will participate in a 20th Century US History course and also partake in community service.

Four other rising seniors will be spending their time in Pre-College programs at Stevens Institute of Technology. They include **Elyse Sanchez** who will be taking Pre-Med Biology, **Sarah Jowett** who will be a part of Introduction to Coding and App Design, **Yasmine Idrissi** who is registered for Business Explorer and **Nayely Gonzales** who was accepted to two programs, Civil Engineering Design and Architecture and Exploring Career Options in Engineering and Science.


JOIN US FOR


Upcoming Events!



 **Thursday, September 12**

Lite Supper and Social prior to Back to School Night

 **Sunday, October 20**
Mother/ Daughter Brunch

 **Friday, January 24, 2020**
Father Daughter Dance

 **March 2020**
Designer Bag Bingo

141st Commencement

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first 7th Grade class. She received both the Social Studies and French awards for having the highest cumulative average in those respective subjects. She will attend Villanova University.

Ms. Degnan along with Board of Trustees chairperson, Susan Mulvaney Odenthal '73 presented additional academic awards to the following students: English and Religion to Julia Murphy, Mathematics to Jarrielle Cabalfin, Spanish to Alexa Gudiel, Art to Janet Mah, Music to Jen Marie Chie and Christina Lai-Le, Musical Theater to Jessica Stanley, Drama to Caitlin Aristizabal and Physical Education to Emma Morris. Recognition for Outstanding Service to the Saint Dominic Academy community was awarded to Maia Bustamante. Caroline Nguyen was honored for having had 4 years of perfect attendance.

At the Baccalaureate Honors Ceremony held on May 29, Danielle Prekop of Jersey City was recognized as the NJSIAA State Scholar Athlete for Saint Dominic Academy. Megan Van Alstyne and Andrea Tlacuilo were honored as Hudson County Interscholastic Athletic Association (HCIAL) Scholar Athletes. Julia Murphy was named the SDA Scholar Athlete.

Commencement speaker, SDA Class of 1975 alumna, Andrea Villani Apruzzese reminded the graduates, "There is so much ahead of you. Your life will be long and the path will be



divergent more times than it will be straight. Please be mindful along that way, to always be true to yourself. Find that part of your heart and soul that guides you, and hold strong and steadfast to what it tells you to do." Mrs. Apruzzese is the current Director of Admissions at the Academy and is a graduate of Rutgers University with an extensive career in business as well as Catholic education.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Degnan, Head of School thanked and congratulated not only the graduates, but also their parents. She concluded with, "And that is it... the end of my time as your Head of School...but we know well that this sisterhood at SDA has existed for 140 years and so today is not an ending...it's the beginning of your future as proud alumnae of Saint Dominic Academy. I am so very lucky



SDA Valedictorian (l) Hannah Dobronsky and Salutatorian (r) Skye Archibald with Head of School Sarah Degnan Moje

and proud to have shared this journey with you. I wish each of you the best of luck, and I am always here if you need anything." The commencement exercises were concluded with Benediction and the Academy's "Alma Mater."





SDA Parents Association News

The SDA Parents' Association would like to thank all the families who participated in this past year's events: Mother/Daughter Brunch, Calendar Raffle*, Father/Daughter Dance and Designer Bag Bingo. By attending these events with family and friends, donating items for the raffles or helping to organize the events, you assisted with the \$22,000 donation we made to Saint Dominic Academy. The funds were used to expand the stage in ELAN, purchase a new digital camera for the Art Department, and subsidize the purchase of athletic wear for our athletes. Funds have also been put aside for the conversion of the computer lab into an audio-visual studio. If you are an athlete and have not purchased athletic wear you are still welcome to do so. Please see Mrs. Mary Murphy in the Advancement Office for sizing. [CLICK HERE](#) for The Order Form.

***CONGRATULATIONS** to the Aidukas and Mattiello families. They won the raffles for SDA families who sold \$500 and \$200 worth of calendar raffle tickets, respectively.

Please, get involved!

Help from our parents is always needed and greatly appreciated. Anyone (moms, dads, grandparents) interested in helping on any of the events next year, please call/text Maria Sasso at (201) 294-9465.

2019-2020 OFFICERS AND THEIR LEGACY

MARIA SASSO '78
President
(MARISSA '16,
DANIELLE AND NATALIE '20)

JANE MATTIELLO
Vice President
(REAGAN '22)

KRISTIN MARTIN
Treasurer
(COURTNEY '21)



Three SDA 2015 Graduates were honored at College Commencement

Brittany Angrosina graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Scranton with her bachelor of science in exercise science and a concentration in nutrition. Brittany was inducted into Phi Epsilon Kappa, an honor society for exercise science students, and Alpha Epsilon Delta, an honor society for pre-health professionals. She has already begun her three years of study for her Doctorate in Physical Therapy at the University of Scranton.

Shannon Kelley graduated Summa Cum Laude from Fairfield University with a Theater major and a Mathematics minor and was awarded the Bellarmine Award for the highest four-year academic average she also received the John and Veronica Gleason Award in recognition of the same. She is a member of the University Honors Program, Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Sigma Nu (National Jesuit Honor Society), and Pi Mu Epsilon (National Mathematics Honor Society) She was also awarded numerous awards in recognition of her achievement in the arts.

Kayla O'Connor was recognized at Mount Saint Mary College for her dedication to academics and the campus community. She was the recipient of the Thomas J. Conlon Memorial Award, given to a student who has shown outstanding leadership in Student Government.





SDA Student Wins 1st Place in Foreign Language Poetry Contest

Saint Dominic Academy freshman **Alessandra DeDios** of Jersey City took home a First Place trophy in the Intermediate Division from the 37th Annual Dr. Orlando E. Saa Poetry Recitation Contest held at William Paterson University of New Jersey on Thursday, May 16, 2019.

According to their website, some 600 plus northern New Jersey area high school students from about 57 school districts participated this year, competing in one of the 8 languages offered. They were Arabic, Chinese, ESL, French, Italian, Korean, Japanese and Spanish.

The Dr. Orlando E. Saa Poetry Recitation Contest started back in 1982 as an offshoot of the Foreign Language Collaborative Program, coordinated by Dr. Claudia Gaudianii, now a President on an Institution of Higher Education in Connecticut. The program is named after the first program coordinator, Dr. Orlando E. Saa.

Other students who participated in the event included sophomores (l-r) **Nastasja Gunnings** of West Orange and **Gabriella Playa** of Lodi and junior **Nayely Gonzales** of Union City.

Class of 2019 College Awards Top \$13 million

College acceptances and scholarship awards for the Class of 2019 have topped \$13 million (\$13,007,189). The students have chosen their final destinations from the many outstanding colleges and universities to which they were accepted:

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Isabel DeBari

DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Courtney Malden

DREW UNIVERSITY

Maya Barnes

ELON UNIVERSITY

Maxine Rieder

EMERSON COLLEGE

Julia Murphy

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

Cristina Sabia

KEAN UNIVERSITY

Ishamma Hoskins

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

Danielle Prekop

LIM (LABORATORY INSTITUTE OF MERCHANDISING)

Elizabeth Campbell

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Mone't Parmes

MARIST COLLEGE

Ava Lekic

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY & HEALTH SCIENCES

Zoria Pompey

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

*Donna Abello
Caitlin Aristizabal
Angelina Avila
Jen Chie
Malina Dundua
Katrice Francisco
Melanie Nunez
Danielle Pineda
Yvette Sarmiento*

NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE

Nina Alvarez

NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY

*Jaime Benko
Ashley Garcia
Hailey Reid*

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Mae Ebid

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

*Kelsy Antigua
Virginia Nyaribari
Gabrielle Trimblett
Stephanie Trujillo
Megan Van Alstyne*

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Valentina Inclan

ROANOKE COLLEGE

Elizabeth Kaminski

ROWAN UNIVERSITY

Alessandra Gonzalez

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

*Meghan Anderson
Jarrielle Cabalfin
Alexa Gudiel
Lauren Hernandez
Christina Lai-Le
Jenna Manzo
Katelyn Pineda
Jessica Stanley
Maryam Wahba*

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY

*Kelly Bartnett
Cassandra Diaz*

SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY

*Julissa DeLaCruz
Leticia Pereira*

SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Mya Chapman

SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY

*Maia Bustamante
Caroline Nguyen*

SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

Janet Mah

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

*Amanda DeJesus
Nicole Gizzi
Nicole Ojeda*

SIENNA COLLEGE

Ashley Marrero

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

*Hannah Dobronsky
Allison Mah*

STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

Sofia Borrero

SUNY, PURCHASE

*Chloe Medina
Renee Medina*

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

Amity Ajero

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Maya Pinney

THE NEW SCHOOL

Andrea Tlacuilo

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN

Nana Sackey

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, TWIN CITIES

Emma Morris

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Skye Archibald

WILKES UNIVERSITY

Rachelle Alparan



BLUE DEVIL PRIDE

Outdoor Track & Field

The program still has a month to go but it has been a wonderful season thus far. Excellent performances at Hillsborough and in the nation's capital (Dunbar HS) where the Blue Devils placed in 8 events including third place in the two-mile relay. The won the county relays. The program continued its grand tradition at the Penn Relay Carnival (125th annual) with two stellar performances. A school record in the 400-meter relay (**Logan Hart '20, Megan Dunne '21, Gianna Artusa '21 and Milani Bethel '21**). The girls then ran SDA's best 1,600-meter relay time since 1983 in winning its class race. SDA's 16TH MEDAL IN 39 YEARS AND 3RD CHAMPIONSHIP (95/03/19). The batons were passed by **Kayla Sullivan '21, Dunne, Suhayla Johnson '20 and Bethel '21**. The team came home and won the Jersey City title for the 109th time in 122 seasons. Excellent 2-mile times prepared the girls for a showdown and 2nd place finish to Snyder in the county meet despite scoring a staggering 115 points.



Softball

The team ended the season 10-9 with wins over Hudson Catholic, Snyder, Memorial and Hoboken as well as two game sweeps of University, Lincoln and Marist.

Scholar Athletes

Scholar Athlete Awards were earned by **Julia Murphy (SDA)**, **Danielle Prekop (NJSIAA)**, **Andrea Talcuilo** and **Megan Van Alstyne (HCIAL)** and **Hailey Reid** and **Isabel DeBarì (UNICO Brian Piccolo Awards)**.





CAMPUS MINISTRY NEWS

Congratulations to the newly inducted Peer Ministers. This very special group of students was honored at our Easter Liturgy on May 1. They are juniors **Dafna Bandach, Bryll Bautista, Chyla Delima, Francisca Diaz, Fiona Erebor, Gianna Farulla, Delaney Hartigan, Marissa Jibodh, Angelique Maniego, Mimi McVey, Emily Perri, Danielle Pinto, Claire Roake** and **Kelly Saint Cyr**. New sophomore peer ministers are **Olivia Aidukas, Avery Aquino, Allison Castaldo, Grace Dirkin, Jennifer Parra** and **Juliana Sabia**.

A Message from Sister Gina

Dear Parents,

It has been a wonderful blessing to minister to your daughters this year. I am grateful for the privilege of sharing their journey toward the God who already dwells within them. As I take leave of SDA this June, I pray that your daughters will know wholeness and peace, and that they will continue to know and preach the truth of God's love. (This summer, I will return to Caldwell, so that I can "taste" new ministry experiences as part of my formation as a Sister of Saint Dominic. I will miss your daughters, and I plan to stay in touch!)

As you know, this Easter season calls us to embrace the peace of the Risen Christ. Indeed, this is our call during every season of our lives! To do this, we must make prayer a central part of our routine. We will never escape the noise of our lives completely, and God does not expect us to. But amid the noise, God does call us to know peace. We cannot be peacemakers if we've never known peace! So give yourself the gift of silence sometime this summer. If you can, spend a bit of time someplace beautiful, and know that God, the Source of all Being and all beauty, is with you. Have your children join you! They may protest, but they need peace as much as you do. What they learn now, they will take into adulthood.

Blessings and PEACE always,
Sr. Gina Scaringella
Campus Minister

Sharing Our Graces

Miss Laurie's junior religion class ended the year with a series of projects in which girls utilized their graces in a variety of positive ways. The projects gave the girls a chance to not only showcase their talents but to also bring light to what they learned in both their Morality and Social Justice classes this year.



Three bake sales were held, the proceeds of which benefited

the Environmental Defense Fund to help support the rebuilding and cleaning of the environment, The Ocean Conservancy which works to help clean and sustain our oceans, and the All Hearts Foundation, an organization that aids in the education and skill development of orphan girls.



A Tag Day was held to collect paper towels and jars of jelly

that were donated to Meals with A Mission. A sock drive and food drive was held to support the St. Peter's University Campus Kitchen.



Pennies for Prevention were collected for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.



Positivity Week was held from May 16–May 22. The goal was to spread positivity

around the school with notes posted on students' lockers and presented to teachers and staff.



The juniors also repainted the mural in the cafeteria as part of a Campus Beautification Project.



LETTERS

A Message from the Head of School

Dear Parents,

Another school year has come and gone...quickly for us all, but I am certain the days and nights flew by for the parents of our 12th grade girls. As they graduate and prepare to head off to college, young adulthood, and a variety of wonderful life experiences, I would just like to take a moment to thank our senior parents for blessing us with your daughters during their high school career. It has been an honor and a pleasure to know each one of them.

Today, I share with you all my yearbook reflections for the class of 2019.

Have a beautiful summer,
Sarah Degnan

My Dear Seniors:

How quickly your time here at Saint Dominic Academy has passed! Much like the pages of a novel that an avid reader cannot put down, your years of high school have flown by in a whirlwind, like a night of reading until 3:00am! And yet, here you are at the culmination of your high school journey, well educated, well read and more than ready to embark on a future filled with bright and endless possibilities. As Head of School, it is my task to inscribe some words of wisdom here, words that will hopefully continue to inspire you when you open this yearbook again in the future to look back on the memories you made.

I think it only fitting that since your years passed as quickly as pages in a spellbinding tale, that I share with you some of the most instructive pieces of advice garnered from literature; last lines of classic novels that should serve you well when you reflect on them now and, later in life.

Richard Ford in *Canada*. "We Try. All of Us. We try." ~ Ladies, try your best at everything life puts before you!

Charles Dickens in *A Christmas Carol* "God bless us, Every One." ~ Look for God's blessings in every aspect of your life; in the joy and the sorrow. He is always with you.

Marilynne Robinson in *Gilead* "I'll pray and then I'll sleep." ~ Do this every night for the rest of your life; and your soul will be at ease.

Margaret Mitchell in *Gone With The Wind* "After all, tomorrow is another day." ~ Let the sun set on the mistakes and sadness that you encounter each day. Let it rise tomorrow and fill your soul with hope.

And finally, using the words that Alice Sebold crafted as her last line of *The Lovely Bones*, I give you my final words of wisdom and my wish for you as your Head of School. *I wish you all a long and happy life.*

With love and affection,
Ms. Degnan

LETTERS

A Message from the Academic Dean

Dearest Parents and Guardians,

My recent likes and loves on the SDA Instagram and Facebook posts tell me one thing... that we are about to wrap up another school year! And, with that, mixed emotions. There's the feeling of accomplishment, the happy anticipation of the summer break, the sadness that comes from knowing the Seniors are leaving us, hopeful that they would all make it a habit to visit, and the pride stemming from the confidence that these young women will do very well in college and wherever life takes them.

What have I been liking and loving lately?

Six of this year's graduating class are from our first-ever 7th and 8th grade classes! Kudos to Skye Archibald, Caitlin Aristizabal, Amanda De Jesus, Courtney Malden, Maia Bustamante and Maxine Rieder!

The Class of 2019, who have been excitedly 'showing off' their college shirts and hoodies and sewing patches on their SDA skirts, has raked in, as of this writing, \$13,007,189 in scholarships and grants!

We just inducted the 2019-2020 Student Council Executive Board. Up for the challenge are Annabel Payamps, Emily Perri, Danielle Pinto, and Chyla De Lima.

Our Science geeks have been at it again! **Charlotte Hennessey '21**, one of 15 gold medalists at the Jersey City Medical Center/Barnabas Health STEM Challenge, was offered a full ride scholarship at New Jersey City University! **Elizabeth Rodriguez '24**, **Nicole Fitzgerald '22**, **Angelina Taite '22**, and **Julianna Sabia '21** were among the silver and bronze medalists and special awardees.

Our poets have fascinated us with their passion and flair for words via their entries in our local poetry contest. Poet of the Year, **Valentyna Simon '20**, won Second Place at the Farleigh Dickinson University Creative Writing Contest for New Jersey High School Students for her riveting piece "The Devil's Chord". **Alessandra De Dios '22**, won First Place at the William Paterson University Foreign Language Poetry Recitation Contest.

Our theater artists staged our spring mini-production of "12 Angry Women", as their final exam for this year's Drama class.

Our singers, the Glee Club and the Dominoes, ended their season with a magnificent Spring Concert and another performance at Carnegie Hall!

Our sportswomen have been bringing home trophies and titles left and right! **Danielle Prekop '19**, our Olympic swimmer in the making, has been honored by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association as SDA Scholar Athlete.

Oh, let me not leave out our teachers. This year, we have shown our appreciation for faculty who go above and beyond the proverbial call of duty. Ms. Violeta McKenzie was recognized as Teacher of the Year at the Senior Club Assembly, to a rousing standing ovation from the entire SDA family! Ms. Kristen Mallon and Mr. Christopher Amnott both received the Perfect Attendance Award, not an easy feat if you ask me. The running track in Lincoln Park has been named in honor of our Athletic Director, Mr. John Nagel, who has been with SDA for 40 years!

I could go on and on. You have one proud Academic Dean here! I know, for a fact, that I will never run out of reasons to like and love our Saint Dominic Academy!

Here's to a wonderful summer!

Mrs. Guen Farrales