



## *Parent Newsletter*

### *From the Head of School*

Dear Parents,

This issue of our Parent Newsletter will be the last one for the 2014-2015 school year. As we close out the academic year and reflect on these past months, I hope you are pleased with your daughter's growth over the past year. Our young ladies were involved in so many activities all year, that I never cease to marvel at their ability to stay focused on their school work at the same time. It is to their credit – and yours – that they understand that their experience at the Academy is meant to be one that engages them fully – mind, body and soul. The more involved they are in the life of the school, the happier they will be in the years they spend here. So I encourage you to talk to your daughters about next year – how they will continue to join clubs and activities as they have in the past, or how they will make this upcoming year one in which they will get involved.

Even as we enjoy the slower pace of summer, we are busy getting ready for the incoming class of 2019. We are looking forward to welcoming over 75 freshmen – the largest class coming in over the past four years. We are also “sprucing up” our new building on Fairmount Avenue so we can begin to hold events there for the entire school community. An exciting time to be part of St. Dominic Academy!

Wishing you a happy and relaxing summer.

May God keep you and yours safe from all harm.

Sincerely,

Barbara C. Griffin  
Head of School

## *A message from the Academic Dean*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Only a few short weeks ago, it seemed as if spring would never arrive and now, here we are at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, my first as Academic Dean at Saint Dominic Academy. As we draw to a close, I can only hope that your daughters took as much knowledge and enjoyment out of this year as I did. It has been a wonderful and productive first year for me and I am already looking forward to the next academic year.

In that vein, preparations are already under way for our revised schedule for the 2015-2016 school year. A later start time will allow more of our families to make use of the different and convenient transportation options to SDA, and will also allow those young ladies who arrive early on a daily basis to have more time to work on academics before the school day begins. Students in grades 7 through 11 have already been given their summer reading titles for required reading and this year, we have gone one step further and prepared lists of suggested supplemental reading. Perhaps you and your daughter would like to have a vacation book club and discuss some of the works our English teachers recommend reading.

Our STEM program continues to move forward, as Ms. Manuel prepares to spend another summer learning to implement the next level of STEM education. I know you join me in wishing her well as she travels to Embry Riddle University this August to further advance this innovative and exciting program. Another highlight of the summer, for me personally and for many of you will be the day we receive AP exam scores for our nine AP classes. AP exams wrapped up on May 12<sup>th</sup> at SDA and we are all eagerly anticipating successful scores again this year!

As always, I thank you for sharing your daughters with me and the faculty and staff each day. Their love of learning and their eagerness to embrace new initiatives make each day at SDA a very happy one. At this time, I do have to extend a special thank you to the parents of our graduating class of 2015. Your daughters have 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 personally had the pleasure of teaching every single one of these fine young ladies and I can speak for myself and on behalf of the faculty when I say they have made us proud and we wish them all the best in college.

Have a beautiful and relaxing summer!

Sincerely,



Sarah Degnan Moje  
Academic Dean

## Saint Dominic Academy holds 137th Commencement Exercises

On Sunday, May 31, Saint Dominic Academy held its 137th commencement exercises for the Class of 2015. Mrs. Barbara Griffin, 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 Tuesday, May 26 at St. Aloysius Church and the Casino in the Park respectively.

The 85 members of the Class of 2015 were collectively awarded over \$12.7 million in college scholarship and grant monies. Class co-valedictorian **Shannon Kelley** addressed those gathered at St. Aedan's Church. Shannon, recognized as a Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program, also received the English award for having achieved the highest cumulative average in that subject. The recipient of many scholarships, she will attend Fairfield University in the fall.

A reflective reading was offered by **Mira Ibrahim**, the co-valedictorian. Mira, the recipient of the Business award, will attend Pace University.

At the Baccalaureate Mass on Tuesday, May 26, class salutatorian, **Anamaria Carrasco** delivered a moving address to her fellow graduates. Anamaria, the outgoing president of the Student Council, had been recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) for scoring at or above the NHRP qualifying level. Anamaria, who will attend Georgetown University in the fall, was also awarded the Spanish award.

Mrs. Griffin along with Board of Trustees chairperson, **Susan Mulvaney Odenthal '73** presented additional academic awards to the following students: French, **Mariana Gomez**, Mathematics, **Brittany Angrosina**, Religious Studies, **Arianna Howard**, Science, **Alexis O'Callahan**, Social Studies, **Elizabeth Boyle**, Physical Education, **Gillian Johnson**, and Music, **Octavia Davila**. For having achieved perfect attendance for all four years of their high school education, medals were awarded to **Brittany Angrosina**, **Lea DiPietro**, **Michelle Kwok**, and **Caroline Meehan**.

SDA Class of 1994 alumna, **Tara McCann** challenged the graduates to "run your own race with resilience and kindness." Ms. McCann holds a Bachelors Degree from Brown University and a Masters from Columbia University's Business School. She has sixteen years of experience in the field of real estate and investment banking, working for such institutions as Deutsche Bank. Most recently, she was named Chief Strategy Officer for Stone Point, where she is responsible for strategic direction in the field of Global Real Estate. Married with two children, she dedicates her time to various charities around the globe which place an emphasis on women and children and is also dedicated to supporting women in math and science careers.

In her closing remarks, Mrs. Griffin thanked and congratulated not only the graduates, but also their parents, citing "their success is yours as well." The commencement exercises were concluded with Benediction and the Academy's "Alma Mater."

**Graduation Photos . . . . .**



**Graduation Photos continue . . . .**



### Saint Dominic Academy 8<sup>th</sup> Graders “Move-Up”

On Friday, June 5, the thirteen members of Saint Dominic Academy’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade had their official “Moving Up” ceremony. The event began with a Mass held at the St. Peter’s University Chapel celebrated by Reverend Father Rocco Danzi, S.J. An official moving-up ceremony followed the Mass and then each girl and her parents were invited back to SDA for a celebratory luncheon.

Mrs. Griffin opened the ceremony by congratulating the girls on being the “first” class to complete both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at SDA in a new and accelerated program that began only two years ago. As each girl’s name was read by 7/8 grade program coordinator, Ms. McLean, Mrs. Griffin and Mrs. Degnan presented them with their official “Moving-Up” certificates. Ms. Armea, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teacher gave each girl an orange rose. Ms. Degnan then presented the students with Academic Awards.

The event concluded with the girls singing “The Climb” as a dedication to their parents.

These members of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class received the President’s Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence: **Skye Archibald, Ya’hyness Berry, Maia Bustamante, Evi Irodamlis and Cassidy LoCascio.** For Outstanding Academic Achievement, Presidential certificates were presented to **Caitlin Aristizabal, Amanda DeJesus, Sneha Hariharan, Courtney Malden, Maxine Rieder, and Gabiella Swope.** **Racheal Gayle** and **Kimberly Smith** were also among the students who “moved-up.”



## Campus Ministry Update

Following a long-standing SDA tradition, the Academy held a May-Crowning.



## 2015 Peer Ministers



## Saint Dominic Academy Celebrates Recent Accomplishments of Students and Faculty

The Saint Dominic Academy community is celebrating the recent accomplishments of some of its students and faculty members.

English teacher **Ms. Dena Arguelles** was invited to lecture at the Annual National Medieval and Renaissance Form held in New Hampshire in April. A Dantisti and Medievalist, Ms. Arguelles' paper's focus and most recent research is a modern take from the analysis of Giorgio Agamben's political theory applied to Dante's *Commedia*: "Atemporal and Extant Ugolino."

Mr. **Isagani Tubera** recently participated in the AP® Readers Conference. He was a member of the Calculus AB Team.

Members of the Saint Dominic Academy **Glee Club** and **Dominoes** received numerous accolades at Fiesta-val, a Choral competition held in Myrtle Beach in late April. The Glee Club received Treble Choir First Place with a Superior rating of 92. The Dominoes received Chamber Choir First Place with a Superior rating of 97. Together, both choirs received the Choral Grand Champion Award for having the highest combined score. Junior **Jennifer Valencia** received an award for Outstanding Piano Accompaniment, while senior **Octavia Davila** was recognized for an Outstanding Vocal Solo. Seniors **Shannon Kelley** and **Alexa Jacobsen** received an Outstanding Vocal Duet award and an Outstanding Quartet award was presented to **Daniella Mendez**, senior, sophomores **Danielle Dompur** and **Christina Little** and freshman **Joelle Francisco**.



SDA faculty member and Glee Club/Dominoes Director, **Mr. Joseph Napoli** received the Award of Distinction in recognition of a notable contribution to musical excellence for direction of the Saint Dominic Academy Treble Choir and Chamber Choir. This is Mr. Napoli's 36th year directing the choirs. Additionally, Mr. Napoli has just accepted an invitation to be among the honorees at the Cusack Care Center's Annual Generation Benefit Luncheon in September. He will receive the 2015 Education Award. Sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, the Margaret Anna Cusack Care Center is a skilled nursing facility housed in the historic St. Joseph's Home for the Blind in the heart of Jersey City.



Sophomore **Aolanie Vargas** has received a full-tuition scholarship to attend the 2015 Summer STEM program at the Cooper Union Albert Nerken School of Engineering. She has been assigned to the program: “Genetically Engineered Machines: The iGem Competition.” The program will run from July 6 - August 13, 2015.

Sophomore **Maria Rivera** has been selected for the Villanova University O’Toole Family Presidential Scholarship upon her graduation from Saint Dominic Academy in 2017. As a candidate for this unique “Promise Scholarship,” Maria will receive a long-term commitment to her education from Villanova University.

**Amy Arce**, a seventh-grader, is sporting a short new hair-do after having participated in St. Nicholas School’s Locks of Love Cut-a-Thon. The event, held in late March, provided hair donations for women and girls affected by cancer.

Incoming freshmen sisters, **Alison Mah** and **Janet Mah** participated in the New Jersey State competition for National History Day in the junior group exhibit category on Saturday, May 2 at William Paterson University. The theme is “Leadership and Legacy in History.” The girls placed in the regional competition at Rutgers with their exhibit on Saint Joan of Arc and moved to the state level of competition. The National History Day competition is a nation-wide contest for both middle school and high school students; about 500,000 students participate every year.

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### Student Council News

On Friday, May 1, the SDA community elected a new slate of officers for the 2015-2016 school year. The new Executive Board is (l-r) President **Gabriela Fortune**, Vice-President **Sara Angrosina**, Secretary **Keely Armitage** and **Christina Trinidad**, who will serve as Treasurer.



### Saint Dominic Academy holds Honor Society Inductions

On March 26, twenty-six students were inducted into the following **World Language Honor Societies**: Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica, Societe Honoraire de Francais and Chinese Honor Society. The ceremony, held at the Academy, was co-presided over by Head of School **Mrs. Barbara Griffin** and **Mrs. Bernadette Costanzo**, chair of the World Language Department.

The new members of the Chinese Honor Society include sophomores **Erin Bailey** and **Danielle Dompur**.

The Societe Honoraire de Francais inducted eight new members, including senior **Toni Giacchi** and juniors, **Sara Angrosina**, **Carolina Creamer**, **Daniella Magcalas**, **Alyssa Roaquin**, **Christina Trinidad**, **Christine Valbuena**, and **Jennifer Valencia**.

Sophomores **Bryanna Mendez** and **Aolanie Vargas** are among the sixteen newly inducted members of the Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica. Other new members include juniors **Kimberly Arana**, **Marlene daCruz**, **Francesca Dell 'Acqua**, **Destiny Foster**, **Amanda Gaccione**, **Gianna Tanner**, **Enelisse Hernandez**, **Michelle Huertas**, **Melissa Jaikissoo**, **Jennifer Leon**, **Jade Perez**, **Marissa Pinto**, **Purnima Prasad**, and **Mariel Santos**.

To be eligible to become members of these Honor Societies, the students are required to maintain a 3.5 (A) average in the first five semesters of their study of the language (or three semesters for Chinese), as well as a 2.5 or better overall average / G.P.A in every semester. The students are also required to demonstrate service to the school and/or community.

After the induction official ceremony, the new and current members of each Honor Society performed presentations in Chinese, French and Spanish for the audience, which included family and faculty members. Refreshments were served.



**Continuing. . . . .**

On Wednesday, April 29, Saint Dominic Academy inducted ten new members 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, **Mariel Teschlog '07**.

The Qualifications for Membership: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character, were presented respectively by the then current NHS officers, all of whom were seniors. They were President **Toni Giacchi**, Vice President **Vanessa Esposito**, Secretary **Brittany Angrosina** and Treasurer **Falak Shahid**. NHS Advisor, **Ms. Patricia Carroll Criaris, SDA '72**, introduced the inductees who then received their pins and certificates from Academic Dean, **Ms. Sarah Degnan-Moje**. 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 **Dana DeCastro**, **Francesca Dell'Aqua**, **Melissa Jaikissoon**, **Elinor Mokaya**, **Chelsea Ramdat**, and **Christine Valbuena** and from the sophomore class **Meagan Duran**, **Lauren Kelley**, **Purnima Prasad**, and **Aolanie Vargas**.



## SDA Spring Athletics Round-Up

**Outdoor Track & Field** - The team won the Outdoor County Relays for the second year in a row and a record 24<sup>th</sup> time, the Jersey City meet which it has not lost since 1985, the South Hudson championship which it has never lost and the County championship for the second year in a row and 19<sup>th</sup> time Outdoors. It was the 49<sup>th</sup> County title for the program. These totals are all records for girls AND boys schools. SDA won all of these meets contested during the Indoor season as well.

The team attended their 35<sup>th</sup> consecutive University of Pennsylvania Relay carnival and finished fifth in the 1,600 meter relay. The Blue Devils have medaled 14 times at Penn. The team has performed well at a host of invitationals (including the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual SDA invitational attended by 18 schools) and junior **Camille Bertholon** has set one school record and is challenging others set in 1990 by Hudson County( all sports) Hall of Famer **Liane (Sullivan) Rae'90**. **Shannon Hester** has set the school record in the Javelin and again qualified for the outdoor National championship in Greensboro, North Carolina. Hester has signed a national letter of intent to continue her running and throwing career at the University of Loyola in New Orleans. Seniors **Emily Mernar** and **Ayanna Patterson** who have both been first team all county athletes plan to compete on the collegiate level as well at Loyola (Baltimore) and St. Peter's, respectively.

**Softball** - The team, which has enjoyed a resurgent two years under coach Mike Nieves completed their season on May 19<sup>th</sup> with a state tournament loss at Pope John 23. The Blue devils were the # 4 seed in North Parochial. SDA claimed a share of our division title (with Bayonne) when they defeated Marist on May 18<sup>th</sup> . The Blue devils led by standout pitcher **Christina Mezey** and six other seniors finished the season with a 17-8 ledger which represents a dramatic improvement from the recent past.

Senior Scholar Athletes- **Toni Giacchi** was recognized by the NJSIAA and **Shannon Hester** was honored as the St. Dominic Academy scholar athlete at the Senior Honors Awards assembly.



**Sarah Marks** and **Emily Mernar** were honored by the HCIAL.



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**Required Summer Reading 2015-2016**

Saint Dominic Academy has prepared assigned reading for all students in the subjects of English and Religion. It is every students' 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!

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade English**

*The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

*Preparing for Adolescence* by Dr. James Dobson

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade English**

*To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

*Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, A Woman's Life* by Giuliana Pelucchi

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade World History Honors**

*The Prince* by Nicolo Machiavelli

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors English**

*The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown

*The Pact* by Jodi Picoult

*Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade English**

*Star Girl* by Jerry Spinelli

*Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

*My Rock and My Salvation* by Zip Rzeppa

**10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors American Literature**

*Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger

*An Abundance of Katherines* by John Green

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

**10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade American Literature**

*Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger

*An Abundance of Katherines* by John Green

**10<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

*A Mighty Heart* by Marianne Pearl

**11<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

*The Shack* by Paul Young

**12<sup>th</sup> Grade World Literature**

*Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* by Immaculee Ilibagiza

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini

**12<sup>th</sup> Grade AP English**

*The Dante Club* by Matthew Pearl

*The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

*Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot

### Suggested Summer Reading 2015-2016

The following is a list of suggested titles. All students at Saint Dominic Academy have required summer reading. This is a supplemental list of books that Ms. Degnan recommends as reading. It is the hope that many of our students will desire to read more than the required novels and, as such, we recommend these titles.

#### **Grade 7-8**

*The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman

*The Cay* by Theodore Taylor

*Children of the River* by Linda Crew

*The Chosen* by Chaim Potok

*Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café* by Fannie Flag

*Wonder* by R. J. Palacio

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

#### **Grade 9**

*The Secret Life of Bees* by Susan Monk Kidd

*All Quiet On the Western Front* Erich Remarque

*A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines

*A Separate Peace* by John Knowles

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson

*Watership Down* by Richard Adams

*A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* by Michael Dorris

*We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson

#### **Grade 10**

*The Story of My Life* Helen Keller

*The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

*Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*A Night to Remember* by Walter Lord

*Dracula* by Bram Stoker

*Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* by T. S. Eliot

#### **Grade 11**

*Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad

*The Collected Short Stories of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

*Animal Farm* by George Orwell

*Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

*Brighton Beach Memoirs* by Neil Simon

*The Once and Future King* by T. H. White

*The Andromeda Strain* by Michael Crichton

*Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer

#### **Grade 12**

*Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand

*Angela's Ashes* by Frank Mc Court

*Shogun* by James Clavell

*Death Comes For the Archbishop* by Willa Cather

*Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo

*The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James

*Antigone* by Sophocles

*Out of Africa* by Isak Dinesen

*Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult

*The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett

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## Parking Restrictions around the SDA Campus

The Jersey City Council has adopted an ordinance which restricts parking in certain streets around the Academy, effective June 1, 2015. The restriction is from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Monday through Friday, in the designated zone. Please pay close attention to the new signs regarding the “resident permit” requirement, as this ordinance will be strictly enforced. The streets affected are as follows:

Street	Limits
Apollo Street	Entire Length
Bergen Avenue	West Side Ave.; Duncan Ave. to Fairmount Ave.
Boland Street	Entire Length
Britton Street	Entire Length
Duncan Avenue	Bergen Ave. to West Side Ave.
Duncan Court	Entire Length
Fairmount Avenue	West Side Ave. to Bergen Ave.
Kennedy Blvd.	East side: Duncan Ave. to 2622 Kennedy Blvd. West side: Duncan Ave. to 2615 Kennedy Blvd.
Montgomery Street	South side; West Side Ave. to Bergen Ave.