Together, We Are Spectacular

We are grateful to all of our parents for enrolling us into Sisters Academy and supporting us during the regular school year. We are also thankful to sponsors, sponsoring sisters, and all of the sisters who helped build this school. Because of you, we are here today.

— Veronica Henriquez, Fifth Grade, at the Blessing and Investiture of New Students

From the first day of school, this year August 29, the new fifth grade students at Sisters Academy learn that they are part of an extensive community dedicated to their success in middle school and in life.

We begin each year with a theme that reflects a dimension of our mission, philosophy, and vision. This year, our school theme is *individually we are special. Together we are spectacular.*

As any one of our students or graduates will tell you, the school theme and traditions play an important part in the community at Sisters Academy. In our beginning weeks of the school year, our new students enjoy one of their first experiences of our sisterhood, the pairing of big sisters with little sisters. The fifth graders know they can rely on their big sisters in the sixth grade to help them adjust to new teachers, new schedules, the extended school day, daily chores, and new expectations.

Another tradition, the Blessing and Investiture ceremony for the new class, was held in September. The ceremony is a celebration of the arrival of our new students. Each girl receives a stole which is a symbol of our sisterhood. The stole physically surrounds each student and reminds her of the love and support that she has while she attends Sisters Academy and even after she graduates.

In reflecting on this year’s theme, we remind ourselves that our community of parents, staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, donors, and scholarship sponsors is what makes our traditions and sisterhood possible. All of you are part of this great togetherness that makes Sisters Academy successful.

Thank you for being individually special in helping Sisters Academy students become spectacular.

— Sr. Delia Dowling, SSND, President

New fifth-graders gather in the science garden for their class portrait.

OUR MISSION

Sisters Academy of Baltimore, a Catholic, community-centered middle school, educates girls of different races, ethnic groups, and religions, from families of limited economic means, particularly in southwest Baltimore. The Academy empowers its students to become agents of transformation in their families, communities, and society.

Sponsoring Congregations

School Sisters of Notre Dame
Sisters of Bon Secours
Sisters of Mercy
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

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Augusta Reilly, RSM
Janet Schmick
Carole Shinnick, SSND
Josette Towles
News Notes

Sisters Academy Recognized in The Daily Record
Sisters Academy of Baltimore was one of three middle schools for girls featured in The Daily Record’s September supplement, Path to Excellence. These schools “are changing students’ lives and the landscape of city education.” As the only private school featured, Sisters Academy was honored to be recognized. The article noted our strong academic program as well as the graduate support program. The link to the article is posted on our website.

Blessing and Investiture
The annual Blessing and Investiture of New Students has become a “homecoming” for our graduates in area high schools. Tyteyona Berry, a senior at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, gave an inspiring talk on behalf of the graduates. After the assembly, the graduates met together and enjoyed a chance to catch up with one another over pizza. The graduates were from Seton Keough, Archbishop Spalding, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Institute of Notre Dame, Mercy High School, and City College High School.

Visit to St. Alphonsus Rodriguez
On August 13-14, Sister Delia and three members of the Jupiter family visited St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Parish in Woodstock, Maryland. Sister Delia and Jaelah Jupiter, Class of 2015, spoke at the Masses while Jaleah (8th grade) and Jenira (6th grade) provided support. The parish community designated the poor box collections during August to benefit Sisters Academy.

New Board of Directors for 2016-2017
Sisters Academy welcomes four new Board of Directors: Anita Williams Feeley, Tonas Kalil, Mark McCarty, and Josette Towles. Ms. Feeley is the retired Director of Advancement at Notre Dame Preparatory School. Dr. Kalil is a professor of Physical Therapy at the University of Maryland Baltimore. Mr. McCarty is the Director of Payroll at the Bon Secours Health System. Ms. Towles is a digital transformation leader and an expert in business and information technology strategy for BITHGROUP Technologies.

“Hamilton” Live at SAB
This year, eighth grade students are learning American history by adding a twist of pop culture, a little rap, and hip-hop.

Ms. Irene Smith, social studies teacher, found a way to make this year’s school theme Individually we are special, together we are spectacular, relevant to American history. She connected the theme to the coming together of our forefathers to create the Constitution. Ms. Smith stated, “I wanted to make the theme come alive through the lessons of history. I wondered how I could teach my students that it was the collective thoughts of individuals working together more than 200 years ago that created our Bill of Rights, which is similar to my students working together to establish their school’s pledge of non-violence.”

The result of her deliberation was to connect our theme to the modern day story of American history, the sensational play “Hamilton.” Since tickets to see “Hamilton” were not an option, Ms. Smith’s next best choice was for her students to read the play. So, she posted to her Facebook friends, “Who is willing to buy a book, the play Hamilton, giving a hands-on experience of American history to a deserving girl?” By 6:00 a.m. the next day, 7 books were promised and in the mail. A few days later a total of 17 books had arrived at school, all from friends, family, former college classmates.

Ms. Smith presented each eighth grade student with a hardback book of the play, “Hamilton,” to read and keep as a gift, along with a pocket edition of the Constitution as a gift from her. In her words, “Reading the play allows the students to reach back into time to learn our country’s history, but in a way that speaks to the language of a 13-year-old girl living in 21st century America.”

And so, the curtain is now up as the eighth grade of Sisters Academy learns their American history with “Hamilton.”

Spring Party at the PARK
SAVE the DATE
Saturday
April 22, 2017
Montgomery Park
The answer is clear. Two charismatic women with the same name sent out their forces. It’s really as simple as that. In 1831, in Dublin, Ireland, Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy, a group of religious women dedicated to improving the lives of the poor. A century and a half later, in the poor neighborhoods of Southwest Baltimore, Sister Katherine Nueslein, RSM, inspired the development of several ministries dedicated to bettering the lives of its citizens.

Catherine McAuley, heiress to the fortune of a Quaker couple she had cared for in their declining years, used her inheritance to build a house in the heart of the city where capable, caring, and well connected women were passionate about lifting up others who desperately needed the services they could provide. Like her religious community’s founder, Sister Katherine Nueslein was dedicated to serving those in need, and she was gifted with a talent for attracting others with hearts like hers. Both of these women recognized the importance of education, especially the education of girls and women.

Among the many women Sister Katherine came to know through her work were like-minded sisters from other religious communities. In the late 1990’s, these sisters came together to share their ideas about other ways they might respond to the needs of those to whom they ministered. As many parish-centered parochial schools were, for a variety of reasons, closing their doors, these sisters believed that they could, and should, offer a uniquely empowering education, a real hands-up to young girls whose families had limited economic means.

Sisters of Mercy were quickly and naturally drawn to the development of this new educational institution: Sisters Academy of Baltimore. They knew well that Mother Catherine McAuley and Sister Katherine Nueslein would heartily approve.

--- Sr. Augusta Reilly, RSM, Founding Member, Board of Directors
Meet Our Board Chair

When you hear the phrase “exuberant leader” it is easy to think of Margaret “Peggy” Moseley: volunteer, committee member, donor, student sponsor, Board member, and above all, a great friend to Sisters Academy. Peggy’s commitment and leadership as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors is clearly moving our mission forward. As the retired Vice President of Corporate Communications for the Bon Secours Health System, Inc., Peggy brought her professional expertise in the areas of strategy and marketing to Sisters Academy. Peggy’s engagement with Sisters Academy deepened as she graciously offered her gifts of service and then generosity when she became a student scholarship sponsor.

When asked what has been most rewarding about her experience with Sisters Academy, Peggy is quick to answer, “One of the best things I have received through my interaction is great joy in meeting and learning about the girls as they go through their four years at Sisters Academy. I love seeing them grow and develop into young women. I am grateful to have been a part of helping make positive changes in their lives and education. I have also loved being a part of our ‘lunch bunch’ with the girls I have sponsored. Our exchanges of conversation over the years have not only helped me to have a deeper understanding for each girl, it has kept me up to date on the current tween-teen lingo! It makes my granddaughters think I’m cool, LOL!”

If you have the chance to attend a Sisters Academy event this year, we hope you will meet Peggy Moseley, our dedicated Board chair. Please thank her for being our “exuberant” leader!

Charitable Giving

Fall marks the time for many organizations to hold charitable giving campaigns in the workplace. Please remember Sisters Academy of Baltimore as you make your pledges for the coming year.

- **United Way**—Sisters Academy of Baltimore is a write-in designee.
- **Combined Federal Campaign**—#46817
- **Maryland Charity Campaign**—#341975939
- **Combined Charity Campaign for Baltimore City**—#2746
- **Giant Food** is continuing its A+ School Rewards program. You need to re-register your GIANT card and designate Sisters Academy of Baltimore (School ID #04638). Re-register online at www.giantfood.com/aplus or call 1-877-275-2758.
- **Harris Teeter** offers a similar program “Together in Education.” To enroll, simply tell the cashier at checkout that you want your VIC card linked to Sisters Academy of Baltimore’s account number (1837).
- Don’t forget to save and send in your “Box Tops for Education.”
- **Amazon Smile**—Start your holiday shopping at www.amazonsmile.com and designate Sisters Academy as your beneficiary at no cost to you.