JOY IN THE JOURNEY

Sisters Academy of Baltimore

ANNUAL REPORT 2018–2019
Our vision is that graduates of Sisters Academy will be well-educated, self-assured, spiritual, and committed young women who are so needed in our community, our nation, and indeed our world. They will be leaders who make a positive difference.
At the end of each day, our prayer is full of gratitude for the joys and blessings of the day. Finding joy day after day eventually becomes joy in the journey of a year.

We are pleased to present you with our report on the joy-filled journey of Sisters Academy of Baltimore during 2018-2019, our fifteenth year. As our travelling companions, your generosity benefits our students as they journey to become well-educated, self-assured, spiritual, and committed young women who are so needed in our world.

As scholarship sponsors, class sponsors, donors, foundations, corporations, Sisters of the sponsoring congregations, volunteers, and friends, you are our faithful companions on the journey. Through your generous gifts and spirit, we find joy even in the detours, wrong turns, and tedious stretches of the journey.

Your gifts helped us not only reach, but surpass our financial goals during the past year. We exceeded our budget in scholarship sponsors, class sponsors, and annual gifts. We met our goal in grants. Most significantly, your gifts provided the means for our students to do their best and be their best during their middle school journey.

In this report, we proudly share accomplishments of our students and graduates. We also report the annual financial summary and significant capital improvements. Our longest-serving staff members, Beth Lorete and Sister Virginia Brune, share their reflections on the journey.

We are pleased to tell you that our endowment has increased significantly during the past year. We are especially grateful to all donors who have contributed to the endowment over the years. Your gifts express hope for the future and confidence in our students, graduates, and mission.

As you read this report, may you find joy in your journey with us. Thank you for being our faithful travelling companions.

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND
President

Andrea Giampetro-Meyer
Chair, Board of Directors
We began our fifteenth school year by welcoming Mrs. Laura Minakowski as Principal. Mrs. Minakowski arrived to lead the students who participated in “New Frontiers,” the summer program for fifth grade applicants. As Principal, she chose the theme for the academic year, “Shine Forth the Goodness of God,” as the daily reminder that students and staff are called to reflect God’s love and light in our world. Throughout the year, Mrs. Minakowski introduced several new ways for students and parents to participate together in the life of the school, such as a “Back-to-School Ice Cream Social” and in February, a “Family Fun Night.”

In September, we received the exciting news that the Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism, with M&T Bank and the Baltimore Ravens, selected Sisters Academy of Baltimore as one of the 2019 Ravens Honor Rows Award recipients. We received the award for outstanding volunteerism and service provided to Paul’s Place. In recognition for the honor, students and staff were invited to attend a Baltimore Ravens football game on November 18. A group photo can be found on the inside back cover.

We also began the year with a generous grant from the Baltimore Women’s Giving Circle, supporting the addition of a new staff member for the expansion of our services to graduates, particularly those entering college. All graduates of Sisters Academy in the Class of 2015 earned their high school diplomas last spring, and all of these young women planned to continue their education in college, beginning in August 2019.

In May, Sisters Academy officially became a Maryland Green School with certification awarded from the Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education. The certification came after the students led a two-year initiative to increase awareness and integrate sustainable environmental practices throughout the school.

With the June graduation of the Class of 2019, our number of Sisters Academy graduates grew to 148 young women. Students in the Class of 2019 are now enrolled in the following high schools: Archbishop Spalding High School, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Episcopal High School (VA), Institute of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Preparatory School, Roland Park Country School, and Western High School. Two students were awarded full tuition Samuel Ready scholarships, one to Institute of Notre Dame and one to Roland Park Country School.
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

For the past five years, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has provided grant funding to Sisters Academy of Baltimore for capital projects through the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program. Eligible projects are those that will protect the school building from deterioration, improve the safety of students and staff, and enhance the delivery of educational programs. Over five years, we have received between $30,000 and $45,000 each year for a total of $193,694.

Major capital improvements have included:

- Replacement of most HVAC units in the school and gym
- Installation of drop ceilings, ceiling tiles and fans in classrooms
- Installation of new carpet in three classrooms and library
- Installation of resinous flooring in kitchen and pantry area
- Installation of white boards in classrooms
- Renovation of boys and girls bathrooms in gym
- Asbestos abatement in gym building
- Replacement of walk-in refrigerator in kitchen
- Installation of energy efficient LED lighting in school building
- Replacement of gates and railways in outdoor areas

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The sixth grade produced, directed, stage-managed, and acted in its own rendition of Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” The class presented the performance for the students, faculty, and staff just before the Christmas holiday. In the season of Advent, the students prepared for Christmas with special prayers led by the eighth grade each day, culminating in the celebration of Las Posadas.


- Student Diana Pinguil was selected by the Center for Talented Youth (CTY) of The Johns Hopkins University to participate in their summer program. Diana studied “Great Cases of American History” for three weeks at University of California, Santa Cruz. Dominique Wimbush, Tylah Allen, Anasia Singletary, and Veronica Henriquez participated in a week long engineering program during the summer at Bucknell University.

- Our graduates continued to stay connected. Uneeke Ferguson, Class of 2009, gave the address at Graduation. Daphnie Hain, Class of 2017, tutored regularly during the school year, and several other graduates assisted in various ways during the summer programs. Many graduates attended the annual Blessing and Investiture of the New Students and they enjoyed the graduate social hour afterwards. They also returned to campus for a special graduate brunch held in June.

NOTABLE FACTS

- 100% SAB students receive donor-sponsored scholarships
- 89% SAB graduates attend a private or selective public high school
- 90% SAB alumnae attend college, a post-secondary school or join the military
- 97% Annual budget funded by donors
- $0 Operating debt
One of Jaelah Jupiter’s fondest memories of Sisters Academy is the Blessing and Investiture of the new class. During this annual ceremony, the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and graduates welcome the new class. Families glow with pride as they watch their daughters receive their stoles, the symbol of their incorporation in our learning community. Jaelah clearly remembers how long the stoles were.

Indeed, the stole was long for a fifth grade girl, but Jaelah grew into the stole as she grew in grace, knowledge, confidence, leadership, and service over four years. Jaelah grew from a shy girl to a self-confident leader. She became fascinated with learning science and discovered her talent in the visual and performing arts. Jaelah credits the “Sisters Academy atmosphere” for helping her become her best self. She commented, “Students and teachers got along. We just knew that everyone was there to help.”

After graduating from Sisters Academy in 2015, Jaelah received a full tuition Samuel Ready scholarship to the Institute of Notre Dame (IND). Jaelah reflected that her transition to high school was “smooth” and she felt that she was ready for all. At IND, Jaelah developed her interest in science and performed in musical and dramatic productions. At graduation, she received the award for outstanding achievement in drama. During the summers, she was a teaching assistant in New Frontiers, the program for students new to Sisters Academy.

Having graduated from the Institute of Notre Dame in June 2019, Jaelah is now in her first year at the University of Maryland College Park. She plans to major in environmental science and policy. Now the stole and all that it represents fits Jaelah “just right.”
Destiny Logan’s journey from Sisters Academy through college placed her on a path to success as a student and as a collegiate athlete in track and cross country. “Sisters Academy offered me a great education. Everything I experienced in middle school – the long school day, the care and constant attention of my teachers, learning time management, and fun opportunities like summer camps at NDP – made all the difference in my desire and ability to succeed in high school, college, sports, and in life.”

After graduation, Destiny attended Catonsville High School, where she was encouraged as an athlete. She then went on to Frostburg State University. In college, Destiny competed as a standout runner from 2014 to 2018. She earned honors as a runner and member of the relay team in the All-Capital Athletic Conference (CAC). She attributes her success not only to her college coach and parents, but also to Sr. Virginia Brune, SSND, who inspired her to learn and even taught her an appreciation for plants. Sisters Academy led her to understand, “Success is not given – it must be earned. You are always one choice away from changing your life.”

In 2018, Destiny received her bachelor’s degree in sociology. She is now in her second year as a graduate assistant with the Frostburg cross country and track & field teams while pursuing a graduate degree in Sports Management. Her goal is to become a professional sports agent and, one day, acquire her own athletic facility. Reflecting on the most significant lesson learned that has remained with her during her education, she paraphrases the words heard most often during her middle school days at Sisters Academy, “Never say ‘I can’t’ because you do not know until you try. Believe you can succeed and you are half way there!”
Sisters Academy of Baltimore is committed to responsible stewardship of all donations received. During 2018-2019, our financial requirements continued to increase as we expanded our instructional program. Our benefactors responded generously through the student scholarship program, the class sponsor program, and annual giving.

**Operating Income 2018-2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students &amp; Class Sponsors</td>
<td>$565,958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Giving</td>
<td>$318,525</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Sponsoring Congregations</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>$27,767</td>
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<td>Family Fees</td>
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<td>Rentals &amp; Miscellaneous</td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>$1,273,484</td>
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**Operating Expenses 2018-2019**

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<th>Category</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Development</td>
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<td>Facilities &amp; Maintenance</td>
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These figures do not include capital income/expenses, donated goods/services, or depreciation, which are included in our audited financial report. For a copy of our most recent audit, please refer to our website, www.sistersacademy.org, under News & Media.
When Sisters Academy of Baltimore opened in 2004, we also began the journey to sustain the school into the future by creating an endowment with an initial gift of $125,000. Over the years, we continued to build the endowment through the generosity of donors who believed in and invested in the continuing vision of the school. Our steady endowment growth is due to sound, wise, and practical investments. In June 2019, the value of the endowment reached $3,268,733.

Frank Fischer was one of our generous visionaries. In 2012, upon the death of his wife, Frank established an endowed scholarship in her memory. Jeanne Bur Fischer planned to volunteer at Sisters Academy when she retired from the Baltimore City public schools. Sadly, she died of cancer soon after her retirement. Frank contributed a gift of $50,000 so that Jeanne’s powerful and beautiful spirit would have an enduring effect on the lives of our students.

From 2012-2014, Jeanné’s dear friend, Martha Oare, invited more than 100 of Jeanne’s many friends and family to contribute to the scholarship fund and together they matched Frank’s initial gift. Frank Fischer passed away on November 16, 2018 and, through his estate plans, he designated his final gift to the endowment at Sisters Academy. Because of his love of Jeanne and his vision, the Jeanne Bur Fischer Scholarship Fund exceeds $170,000. Now Frank and Jeanne will continue to provide a scholarship for a student in perpetuity.
Sisters Academy of Baltimore is grateful to the following individuals, religious communities, businesses, and foundations that have chosen to make a multi-year commitment to sponsor a student for four years.

**Endowed Scholarships**
- Mary Catherine Bunting
- Jim & Gerry Cavanaugh
- Jeanne Bur Fischer Scholarship Fund
- France-Merrick Foundation
- Jesuit Community of Loyola University Maryland in honor of Rev. Timothy Brown, S.J.
- Middendorf Foundation
- Joseph & Clare Mosmiller

**Sponsoring Congregations**
- School Sisters of Notre Dame
- Atlantic-Midwest Province
- Sisters of Bon Secours USA
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- South Central Community
- Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
  - East-West Province
  - Ohio Province

**Class Sponsors**
- Bon Secours Mercy Health Mission Fund
- Frank Family Fund for Sisters Academy of the Baltimore Community Foundation
- The Leroy M. Merritt Charitable Trust
- Montgomery Park, LLC & Washingtonville, LP
- Daniel G. & Jean K. Schuster Foundation

**Student Sponsors**
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- ATAPCO Group
  - American Trading & Production Corporation
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  - Jeffrey & Karen McCormack
  - Anne & John Patterson
- Anonymous (Multiple Donors)
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- Bon Secours Mercy Health
  - Circle #1
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- Bon Secours Mercy Health
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  - Patricia Butner
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  - Kendall† & Frank Dingle
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  - Patricia Silva
  - Brenda Sue Chilman
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  - Marilyn Duker & Dale Mc Ardle
  - Janice & Ronald Ford

**Student Scholarship Sponsors 2018–2019**
- Frank Family Foundation Fund of the Baltimore Community Foundation
- Frank Family Fund for Sisters Academy of the Baltimore Community Foundation
- Friends of Sisters Academy Giving Circle
- Lillian Gibbons
- James & Nancy McDonald
- Regina McPhillips
- Kathleen & David Power
- Michele & John Zurad
- Stephen Fruin & Susan Griisser
- Mark D. Gately
- Barbara Gaver
- Jennifer & Mark Geibig
- Rose Gordon Memorial Fund
- G. B. Charities, Inc.
- Douglas & Joan Groves
- Mary Hambleton & Daughters
  - Mary Hambleton
  - Regina Hambleton
  - Celia O’Brien
- Roland Harvey
- Margaret Hayes
- Mimi & Robert Helm
- Himmelrich Family Giving Circle
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  - Carrie Jo Himmelrich
  - Ella Himmelrich
  - Jacob & Sarah Himmelrich
  - Pam & Sam Himmelrich
  - Pam & Sam Himmelrich
  - Beverly & Karlttner
  - Lynn & Stuart Janney

† Deceased
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Peter Leffman
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Earline Piscitelli & Gary Walker
The Joseph Mullan Company
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Kathleen & Roger Novak
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Martina & Arthur Varnado
John & Kate Walsh
Isabel & Richard Waters
Clare Wherley
Peggy & John Wilckens
Anne & John Wisniewski
Ellen Yankellow & William Chapman
† Deceased
**DONORS 2018–2019**

We appreciate your generous gifts as scholarship sponsors, donors to our Annual Appeal, contributions of in-kind services, and many volunteer hours to benefit our students’ education, inspiring our vision for success. Thank you to all who support Sisters Academy of Baltimore.

**Circle of Distinction**
($100,000+)
Mary Catherine Bunting
Jim & Gerry Cavanaugh

**Circle of Excellence**
($50,000 to $99,999)
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Sisters of Bon Secours USA
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**Circle of Leadership**
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Isabel & Richard Waters
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Ellen H. Yankellow & William Chapman

† Deceased
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Northrop Grumman Foundation
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Janet & John Schmick
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Jean Sullivan
The Thomas More Project
Josette Towles
Universal Service Administrative Company
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Jane M. Smith

Mary Louise Monaghan, SNDdeN
Denise Curry, SNDdeN
Catharine Conway Nass
Eric & Patricia Nass
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur - Glen Avenue Community, Baltimore, MD
Mark & Cheryl Wong

Clare Mosmiller
Nancy H. Bateman

Carol Mullin
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Kernwood Road Community, Baltimore, MD

Marie Mullin
M. Denise Mullin

Cecilia Wintz Murphy
Robert E. Galiszewski
Mary Irish
Barbara Platania

Joan Muth
Suzanne & Terry† Spencer

Sarah O’Brien
Marion B. Corry

M. Patricia Olert
Mary T. Olert

Anne V. Perrin
Kathleen A. Kleinsmith

Catherine Phelps, SNDdeN
Ursula Blank McCormick

Mary Bernadette Rouse
Eileen & John Leonhart
Mark C. Rouse

Mary Veronica Schumm, SSND
Joanne & Joseph Shanley

Jane Claire Simon, SSND
Jane M. Smith

Sisters at St. Angela Hall,
Kensington, MD
Rea Marie McDonnell, SSND

Terry Spencer
School Sisters of Notre Dame
- Kernwood Road Community,
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Mary Kateri Sullivan, RSM
Doris Bintrim

Patrick Sullivan
Anne S. Burgan

Kateri Sullivan, RSM
Doris Jean Miller, RSM

Bill Thompson
Mary Dowling Thompson

Roberta Tierney, SSND
Mariella McMillan, SSND

The Tignall Family
Mary Ackerman
Dorsey & Helen Tipton
Barbara A. Tipton
Terry & Jackie Tipton

Msgr. Arthur F. Valenzano
John E. Thomas

Mary Valuckas
Barbara Valuckas, SSND

Sulpice Walsh, SSND
Nancy H. Bateman

Mary Ann Winterling
Leah Winterling Bark
We are pleased to share the reflections of Sr. Virginia Marie Brune, SSND, and Mrs. Beth Lorete who have traveled our journey as dedicated faculty members over the past fifteen years. As the art and religion teacher, Beth came via the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry. Sr. Virginia chose to be part of Sisters Academy because in her words, “I was intrigued by the idea of creating a school in 2004 that liberates, transforms, and educates middle school girls. I decided I wanted to be part of making the vision come alive!”

You both began your journey in the beginning years of Sisters Academy. In your experience, what does it take for a young girl to succeed at SAB?

**Beth:** It takes real dedication to the education we offer for both the student and her family. It takes excellent attendance, openness to new learning opportunities, such as religion class or participating in an Outward Bound field trip. It takes asking questions and having educational conversations. It takes accepting responsibility and ownership of our school space, doing daily chores, and being surrounded by positive, visual messages throughout the school. Most of all, it requires understanding the key elements of our mission and philosophy.

**Sr. Virginia:** It takes a community of four: students who are motivated with a desire to grow; parents and guardians who support the girls being accountable for learning and behavior; teachers and administrators who live the mission; and sponsors and donors who believe in the empowerment of young women.

What is the most significant lesson that a student learns during her middle school journey at Sisters Academy?

**Sr. Virginia:** Embrace the journey to become the best version of yourself. The lesson is to create your own self-definition and to become the best you can be, and then to have the willingness to share your gifts with others.

**Beth:** I would add learning, respect for oneself, others, and all of creation.”

What has given you the most joy in your journey with SAB?

**Beth:** Day by day, seeing the girls’ creativity in art classes and watching them grow in their skills. I also feel great joy when alumnae visit and share that they are still on their journey of education. And I enjoy seeing graduates give back as volunteers eager to work with the students.

**Sr. Virginia:** I agree, seeing the girls’ potential, watching it take root and blossom as our graduates, no matter where they are – Baltimore city, western Maryland, the US Navy, Africa, China. And learning about their lives - being a wife and mother, serving others through social services, providing care in hospitals, and continuing their education in college, graduate school, law school, and medical school. This is the joy of our journey together.

What is your greatest hope for the journey as Sisters Academy continues forward?

**Beth:** For our mission to always remain strong and that every graduate continues her journey of transformation.

**Sr. Virginia:** For the young girls, who are motivated to grow and want to make a positive difference in the world, that they will continue to step through the door of SAB, and with those who have gone before them, together they become young women who continue the work of transformation.
Faculty and Staff

Delia Dowling, SSND, President
Laura Minakowski, Principal
Sayra O. Barrera
Christine Barrett
Joseph Bogucki
Anne Maura English
Barbara Gailunas
Stacy Gunnip, SSND
Angela Healy
Gabrielle Hurley
Elizabeth Kendall
Martha Kendall
Elizabeth Lorete
Joanna Martin-Guest
Bria McCormick
Elizabeth Nash
Jannis Rhodes
Latonya Sample
Michele Rodriguez-Smith
Katherine Roof
TraceyAnn Smith
Barbara Tipton
Pauline Tobias
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 those in southwest Baltimore. The Academy empowers its students to become agents of transformation in their families, communities, and society.