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.

Until We Meet Again

“Only in winter can you tell which trees are truly green. Only when the winds of adversity blow can you tell whether an individual or a country has steadfastness.”

- John F. Kennedy

Sisters Academy has remained steadfast in our mission of transformation through education during the year-long winds of the pandemic. Balancing the necessity to be nimble with the call to steadfastness, our teachers and staff have maintained the academic program while re-envisioning our rituals, meaningful activities, teaching methods, and structure of the school day.

In the past few weeks, signs of spring abound. At the beginning of the day, the birds of Southwest Baltimore are chirping, and at the end of the day, there is still daylight. And the trees are becoming truly green again. Best of all, our students returned for hybrid learning in February.

Through our talented staff and the gift of technology, the students watched the Inauguration of President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, and cheered with Mission Control as the Rover “Perseverance” landed on Mars. We held our annual Blessing and Investiture of New Students as an in-person event on February 12. Each new student proudly received her stole, a symbol of her incorporation into our learning community.

Thank you to our scholarship sponsors, annual donors, monthly donors, and volunteers for your steadfast generosity in response to our appeals. Your gifts surpassed our expectations. You have given us fiscal strength to support our educational strength. We have missed your visits this year, particularly for our Fall Donor Day and Spring Sponsor Appreciation Day. When conditions improve, we will meet again in appropriate and safe ways in the months ahead.

As we look forward to the last months of the academic year, summertime, and the new school year, we will be steadfast in our mission with an emphasis on academic support, summer programming, social readjustment, team sports, the continued use of technology, and a focus on music. Yes, MUSIC! After steadfastness, comes music.

My heart, O God, is steadfast; I will sing and make music with all my soul. (Psalm 108)

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND, President
Bon Secours Volunteers

Sisters Academy is a service site for four men and women in Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry (BSVM), sponsored by the Sisters of Bon Secours. Each volunteer made a year-long commitment to share in the Bon Secours charism of compassion, healing, and liberation. Through the program, volunteers grow spiritually, live simply in community, practice justice, and learn through service.

As recent college graduates, they assist teachers in virtual classrooms, organize clubs, mentor students, and lead special events. The volunteers agree that being virtual is their biggest challenge, but they have found creative ways to become part of the school community.

“The first few months were difficult, but I feel that over time in classes and through clubs I have gotten to know some students fairly well and do have some great relationships,” says volunteer Kelly Flynn.

Sara Snowden, another volunteer said, “My favorite moment was watching the new student Investiture. It was wonderful to see the community come together and fun to clap and cheer as they each spoke and received their stoles.”

BSVM was established in 1999 and Sisters Academy has been a site for volunteers since our opening in 2004.

Classroom Current Events

From the Inauguration to NASA’s Rover landing on Mars, our students are constantly learning with current events.

Through the use of Discovery Education, Ms. Williams’ science students watched NASA’s Rover, “Perseverance,” land on Mars. “I wanted to see the historic landing because I wanted to see all the science that was included and see what people did and how they did it,” says seventh grader Andrea Estrada. “It made me very excited and nervous.” The nerves went away when “Perseverance” touched down, as several students cheered with the scientists at Mission Control.

In January, the entire school watched President Biden’s inauguration and the historic swearing in of the first female and woman of color as Vice-President. For seventh grader Samauri Canty, it provided hope for the future. "Vice-President Harris’ inauguration was very important because not only was history being made because she was black, but because it was a SHE! It proves that women are capable of WAY more things than anyone could ever imagine."

Hydration Stations

The watercooler talk at Sisters Academy is literally all about water these days. Thanks to a grant received through the CARES Act for pandemic relief, five new water hydration systems have been installed. The water refill stations make it possible for students to use and refill their own water bottles. In addition to refilling stations being safer for use during the pandemic than traditional water fountains, the hydration stations are also environmentally friendly. These systems reduce waste, a person’s carbon footprint, and save money overall.

Student Clubs

From virtual to in-person, this school year has been like no other. However, one thing has remained constant, students continued to join school clubs. Among some of the options offered this year: yoga, drawing, cooking, Zumba, and book club. Clubs met virtually at the beginning of the year and transitioned to in person once students were back in school.

News Notes

The Science of COVID-19

Johns Hopkins has been at the forefront of the pandemic. Now, Johns Hopkins University is using that knowledge to create virtual workshops to help students from schools across Baltimore build awareness about the science of COVID-19 and the public health response.

Our students were lucky enough to take part in two workshops and ask questions about the virus and how it affects the world.

Topics included everything from biology and mathematical models of the pandemic, to the physics behind wearing a face mask and the chemistry of hand washing and hand sanitizer.
New Students Officially Welcomed to Sisters Academy

The Blessing and Investiture of New Students is a Sisters Academy of Baltimore tradition. The ceremony is designed to welcome new students into the school community.

This year’s event took place on Feb. 12 at St. Clement Church. The school community officially welcomed 20 fifth graders and four sixth graders. Sister Delia Dowling, President, presented a custom-made stole to each new student. The stoles are representative of the class and will be worn at special events throughout the students’ four years.

As the stoles were presented, members of the 6, 7, and 8 grades provided words of wisdom while proudly wearing the stoles from their own investiture ceremony.

Keeping with tradition, alumna Mykia Peterson ’17 gave the address. She encouraged students “to make the most of their time at the school.” The high school senior expressed how important the relationships she made were and how the school prepared her for high school.

New students were allowed to have one guest in attendance. For the first time, the event was live-streamed to allow those who couldn’t attend to watch the ceremony.

The Blessing and Investiture Ceremony is normally held in the fall, but due to the pandemic it was postponed.

Advice for the next generation from Sisters Academy graduates

Mykia Peterson
Sisters Academy
Class of 2017
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
Class of 2021

“My best piece of advice to this year’s students is to be your original, creative self. Don’t let what anyone else thinks control your life or the angle your life goes...Don’t be scared to talk to people – it’s a great source of networking for your future. It’s always great to meet someone or learn something new.”

Briana Knox
Sisters Academy
Class of 2010
University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Class of 2020
Business Owner
Ariane Royale clothing line
Holidays at Sisters Academy

The holidays may have looked a little different in 2020, but Sisters Academy continued with traditions of Las Posadas and the Christmas Bazaar.

Las Posadas commemorates the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a safe place where Mary could give birth to Jesus. This year, it was presented virtually and led by the 8th grade.

Principal, Dr. Jeanne Dolamore hosted a new event that highlighted Nativity sets from regions around the globe. Several students took part in the telling of the nativity and relating it to the region they were representing.

The event began with 5th grader Autumn Taylor’s violin performance of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” with Dr. Dolamore. You can view the entire Nativity tour and hear Autumn’s performance at the Sisters Academy Facebook page.

The school hosted its popular Christmas Bazaar on Dec. 18. Social distancing guidelines were observed as students were assigned times to “shop” in the gymnasium. After purchasing gifts, students moved inside to the gift wrapping station set up in the Gathering Space. Masked volunteers wrapped packages to look beautiful. In addition to the day’s events, there were opportunities for students to take part in raffles for gift cards and holiday decor.

This event would not have been possible without the help of dozens of volunteers who gave their time and talent to help with set up, donations, staffing gift stations, and providing gift-wrapping services. Many thanks to everyone who made the Christmas Bazaar safe, fun, and successful!