



PATHWAYS

A Publication for the Alumnae, Parents and Friends of St. Catharine Academy

Winter 2018

SCA BEGINS MAJOR FACILITIES UPGRADE



A master planning process spearheaded by the Board of Trustees in 2009 drove the initiation of a \$2.5 million capital campaign to address major facilities issues including security, handicapped accessibility, a much needed expanded lobby, 21st century technology, and to lay the foundation for the construction of a new gym.

The pictures above and below show the location of the new lobby which was once occupied by the Chapel, and now functions as a classroom for fitness and dance. An elevator will be installed in the lobby connecting the main building and the former convent wing. The Laconia Avenue entrance will be closed as an entryway to improve student and building security. However, the iconic statement over the door, “America, behold thy strength and thy glory, woman, pure, enlightened, tender and wise” will remain.

Construction is slated to begin Summer of 2018 ❖





Unfolding Stories of Possibility

Sr. Patricia Wolf, RSM '62

I could not be more pleased to share this edition of Pathways with you. More than anything else, every feature story celebrates the power of possibility.

First, in early June 2018, we begin the renovation and construction phase of the capital campaign. Still a little shy of our campaign goal of \$2.5 million (we've raised \$2,252 million), St. Catharine Academy will undergo its first major capital renovation since the Williamsbridge Road building opened in 1953. A modest undertaking by capital campaign and construction standards, it is huge for us. A new entryway and lobby will be constructed in the space of the former chapel, creating a welcoming presence while, at the same time, addressing much needed changes for security and safety. An adjacent garden will provide students with space just to be quiet. An elevator will connect the main building with the former convent while opening up opportunities for students and guests with physical limitations. This effort has been a long time in the making and I am very excited to get this phase underway.

An Endowed Gift

Just one year ago SCA established an Endowment Fund with a scholarship gift from **Henry and Aurora Rogati Ferrero**

'61. Aurora and Henry hoped that their gift would encourage others to do the same. In other words, their gift would have a multiplier effect. I am delighted to announce the establishment of the **Sr. Rhea Bean, RSM Endowed Scholarship**, named in honor of SCA's first president, by **Philip and Janet Bean**. Sr. Rhea has always understood the power of possibility embedded in an endowed scholarship. As president she labored tirelessly to find funds for tuition assistance. It was Rhea's heartache if she couldn't meet the need because she knew that a scholarship goes way beyond the life of a single student; it impacts the security of the family too. I am so grateful to Philip and Janet for bringing one of Rhea's greatest hopes to fruition.

That Inspiring Teacher or Program

Sometimes it takes just one special teacher or program to usher us into who we are. Alumnae of my vintage may recall **Sr. Mary Margaret Fitzgerald, RSM**, who taught me algebra, Latin and French. I was hardly a standout student in her subjects, but something clicked and she ushered me toward the Sisters of Mercy. **Mia Vetri '14** (page 5) points to social studies teacher **Jillian Bozzi** who piqued her interest in law, and influ-

enced her career choice of going to college and major in criminal justice. **Maria Begley Ciampi '77** (page 6) credits English teacher **Kathleen Jean Ciotti** for igniting a passion for teaching and writing.

Sometimes it takes, not just a special person, but a special program to unlock potential. At SCA, we strive to individualize the learning needs of our students. SCA is one of the few Catholic high schools to resource students with a prescribed individualized education program (IEP). With two dedicated teachers and 50 available seats we are fully subscribed. Oftentimes failure and frustration in elementary school precede the high school experience. Yet, the right program and teacher can transform a student's self perception and truly increase their likelihood for success. I invite you to celebrate the achievements of **Larimar '16** and **Jeannine '18** as they recount how they came into their own at SCA (page 4).

Enjoy this Pathways and its celebration of possibilities. It comes to you with great pride. The promise cradled in these stories lifts us up and carries us forward, day in and day out. As Sister of Mercy and president, I am grateful for it all. ❖

St. Catharine Academy

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Endowed Scholarship Honors Sr. Rhea Bean, RSM

In September 2018, a 9th grade student will begin her educational journey at St. Catharine Academy with a four year partial tuition scholarship because of the life, passion and witness of one woman, Sr. Rhea Bean, RSM, SCA's first president. It is the exquisite witness of Sr. Rhea which inspired Dr. Philip and Janet Bean to establish an endowed scholarship in her honor. "We wish to honor Sr. Rhea Bean because she is a special person who has always given of herself. This is an opportunity to extend her dedication to St. Catharine Academy and its mission to educate young women."

The Sr. Rhea Bean Scholarship will ordinarily be awarded every four years to a ninth grader based on financial need and academic achievement, at least an 85% average. Students receiving the scholarship must contribute a portion of their tuition from family funds.

"Through her involvement at St. Catharine Academy, Sr. Rhea touched and broadened many lives. This scholarship will allow her to do so in perpetuity."

Reflecting on Sr. Rhea's many contributions to church and society Philip and Janet said, "In addition to being a very kind and caring human being, Sr. Rhea has always shared her skills throughout her life--whether through grade school teaching, religious education, youth ministry, leading the Sisters of Mercy of the New York Regional Community, serving as President of St. Catharine Academy and Our Lady of Victory Academy, or preparing the liturgy for something so special as St. Catharine's 125th anniversary celebration. Additionally, through her involvement at St. Catharine Academy, Sr. Rhea touched and broadened many lives. This scholarship will allow her to do so in perpetuity."

When told of the establishment of the endowed scholarship, former SCA Board and committee members who worked with Sr. Rhea took the moment to share their own reflections about the woman herself. Some speak of Sr. Rhea's personal

touch. Bill D'Amato who served on the development committee said, "Working many intense hours with Rhea, I was filled with kindness; she had a voice that always seemed to smile, a remarkable humility, and an avenue to all things

Mercy." Zeroing in on her leadership style, Tom Muriello, former board member said, "Sr. Rhea is one of those special people who has a way of getting you to share her passion and vision for helping others without reservation or hesitation." Karen Adragna D'Aleo, '71, former board member who still serves SCA on its Audit/Finance Committee, appreciates the seeds that Sr. Rhea sowed. "When I first met Sr. Rhea I was very impressed by her deep commitment to the Mercy education mission," said Karen. "At that time, SCA's financial situation was somewhat shaky, and Sr. Rhea was determined to provide the best education to those who sought it, granting subsidies where possible. At the same time, she set about putting in place the necessary steps to bring order and discipline to the governance of the school and put it on secure financial footing. Over the course of almost 17 years that goal has been achieved. It is most fitting that a scholarship in her honor is to be endowed."

If you wish to join Philip and Janet Bean in honoring Sr. Rhea Bean, you may make a gift to the Sr. Rhea Bean Endowed Scholarship.

About Endowed Scholarships

Endowed scholarships establish a lasting way to honor or memorialize a person or family. Endowment creates a permanent funding source designed to support deserving students now and into the future. The minimum amount required to establish an endowed scholarship is \$50,000. Additional gifts may be made, sometimes by family and friends, to increase the value of the scholarship. The principal remains intact while the interest is used to create the scholarship award each year. ❖



Sr. Rhea Bean, RSM

Learning at St. Catharine's is not one size fits all

The Higher Achievement Program for freshmen through seniors at St. Catharine Academy provides academic support services to make sure each student is living up to her academic potential.

According to Carmela Melucci-Ivanov, assistant principal of academic services, "What makes St. Catharine's program unique is the commitment we make to each student's academic progress. We provide the supports like time management and study skills to create strong students who are often not just doing well, but making honor roll and receiving scholarships to college."

Students who have been through the program say it has enabled them to be successful both at St. Catharine's and in college. Larimar Rivera '16, now a sophomore at Manhattanville College said, "St. Catharine Academy helped me a great amount. Without them, I wouldn't have the foundation. They taught me I am not dumb."



Teacher Roseanna Sahadeo teaches from the philosophy: "Teachers who love teaching, teach children to love learning."

A sports studies major with a minor in psychology Larimar said she used to be afraid to speak. "Now I love talking. I feel confident. I used to struggle with test taking. HAP went over materials before tests. It really helped."



Larimar Rivera '16

Roseanna Sahadeo, a special education teacher in the program, said students are involved in various levels of thinking during instruction. "These techniques aim to reach all students, including uninvolved students and students who have experienced failure in the regular classroom. Our atmosphere is cheerful and work-centered and on any given day observers would see one small group of students (not more than five) interacting with one another, writing, reading, constantly engaged."

Jeannine, a senior in the program, agrees that the program creates an atmosphere conducive to learning. She said that she works on HAP skills in the middle of the day, which gives her a chance to get her life back in order. "The program helped me become my own person," Jeannine said. "I have a strong bond with my teachers. I connect with them on a different level."

Both Larimar and Jeannine said that they would have struggled without the skills they gained in HAP. Larimar pointed to the time management skills as a key component to her success while at SCA and Manhattanville. Jeannine concluded, "It helped me become my own person." ❖

Looking Back and Looking Forward

During my time attending St. Catharine Academy, being a student was very difficult. This was not due to the way I was being taught, but it was the fact that I was not applying myself to my full potential. I was a very careless student because I was not interested in any basic subject; whatever I was not interested in, I would not pay attention, nor would I want to do any of the work I felt would be unnecessary to do because of my disinterest. The only thing I would look forward to was seeing my friends and attending the many different events St. Catharine's would offer.

This was all until I became a senior in 2013. I had put Ms. Bozzi's Law class on my schedule because the problem-solving part of law was something I have always been interested in. Ms. Bozzi taught me in a way where I understood and where I was intrigued in every class. I knew this class would be different because it was something I knew I could use in the future. At the end of senior year, Ms. Bozzi's law class was the only class I had ever received a perfect grade. That grade showed me that I can do it and that I was capable.

This was just what I needed to push me to strive for the better at LIU Post as a Criminal Justice major and a Forensic Psychology minor. The experience I received in Ms. Bozzi's class gave me the confidence I needed in order to feel like college was actually worth going to. As I am now in my last semester of college, I look back to high school and see such improvement from then to now. My college experience showed me not only what I needed to learn for my future, but also how to be an independent young woman. Entering college, I no longer had my parents to take care of me when I was sick or hungry. I was on my own, forcing me to take care of myself. The adaptation was hard, but quick.



College Senior Mia Vetri '14 Reflects

As I now plan my life after college, I am in hopes of completing my masters in criminal justice and later on receiving my Ph.D. in forensic psychology. With these degrees, I plan to become a detective and enter the minds of criminals to determine their motives in the crimes they have committed. Although this career is male dominated, being in St. Catharine's showed me that there is no such thing as a male dominated career when a single woman can be more than capable of achieving the same dream as a man with a great education and a striving attitude.

Going from a struggling high school freshman to a 4.0 GPA in college, is enough inspiration needed for me to succeed in all aspects of my future. To the alumnae and students of St. Catharine Academy, never doubt yourself, for you are capable of paving your own path to success. ❖

Following Your Dream to Town Hall

By Patrice E. Athanasidy



Maria Begley Ciampi '77

Christmas came early this year for Maria Begley Ciampi '77. Her original musical, *Kris Kringle*, premiered at The Town Hall in the Broadway theater district in New York City with a star-studded cast on Thanksgiving Weekend. "It is amazing to see something that was in my mind spoken by an actor...They start talking about your characters as though they are real. It really takes the work of many others to bring a musical to life."

Maria said she wanted to create a show like the ones she saw when she was little. "When I grew up, there were shows that you and your grandparents could go to together. There were stories with different levels so everyone could enjoy them. In *Kris Kringle*, there is puppetry for the kids, young *Kris Kringle* and Evelyn Noel falling in love for the young people, and Santa and Mrs. Claus being in love for the older generation. All of the layers of the story also share a universal positive message."

The journey to Town Hall began nearly a decade ago with a screenplay of the same name. Many people encouraged Maria to adapt the screenplay into a musical, and so Maria set to work with a composer. The show blends humor and its uplifting message with several twists and turns. "I hope people will go home having two hours of beauty and joy in their life."

A former law professor, Maria discovered her passion for writing at St. Catharine's. Her 10th grade English teacher Ms. Kathleen Jean Ciotti invited her to be part of a senior honors class. "As part of the course, we had to read famous literature, and at one point, Ms. Ciotti wanted students to do presentations on a book or play that they chose for themselves. I loved drama. When I got up in front of the class to discuss Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, I just started walking around the class with no notes. It taught me, at that moment, that I wanted to become a teacher. I also learned that I wanted to be a writer."

The creative writing came later though. First Maria graduated from Fordham University as the valedictorian, taught at St. Barnabas, attended St. John's University School of Law as a St. Thomas More Scholar, and then worked for a law firm in New York City. She and her husband, Arthur Ciampi, also a lawyer, met at Fordham and went to law school together. They established their own law firm in 2006 focusing on law firm partner disputes. While building their careers, they also had two children, Matthew and Joshua, now grown.

Following her teaching dreams, Maria became a law professor, first at Pace University School of Law and then at St. John's University School of Law, where she also served as assistant dean. While at St. John's, she followed her passion for writing, but stuck to law textbooks, one of which has been used at Harvard Law School.

Having always used stories in her classroom to teach her students about the work of a lawyer, Maria began to study storytelling as a writer. The screenplay for *Kris Kringle* was the result.

Maria considers St. Catharine Academy a strong foundation for her life's work. "I loved that St. Catharine's would stand up for others and try to advocate for them. I do that as a lawyer now. I realized that I never let the place that inspired me to stand up for and express myself know what the school had done for me. I wanted St. Catharine's to know."

Her advice to the students of today? "If you don't keep knocking on doors, you never know what you'll find behind them. For me, it also took hard work, faith, taking chances and some luck." ❖

1950 Martha Schuierer Habermann would love to hear from any of her classmates who live in the Maryland/Delaware area.

1957 Joan Miglorisi Auletta writes, “Much love to all my friends from St. Catharine’s new and old. Would love to hear from you.”

Rosemarie Birri D’Alessandro is the founder and president of the Joan Angela D’Alessandro Memorial Foundation, which is named after her daughter Joan, who was killed in 1973 while delivering Girl Scout cookies to a neighbor. Joan’s foundation advocates for child safety and victims’ rights. In addition, it contributes to educational programs for inner city children. The foundation has also successfully advocated for five new laws to improve child safety and victims’ rights.

1960 Regina Frey Schultz writes, “Thanks for your love and prayers, my granddaughter Maile Jo is doing beautifully after heart surgery last November. Please continue to pray for our family.”

Norita Reid Carlson informed us that Nancy Joy Wallander ‘60 passed away on August 28, 2017. “Nancy was a dear friend in grade school as well at St. Catharine Academy. Nancy traveled with me on our first tenting trip of fireworks around America.”

1962 Ann Sgrignoli Gerbeth is a member of the Respect Life Society in her parish. She has become very involved with the defense of the unborn as well as the elderly. Ann writes, “I cannot accept the atrocity of abortion or the trend of assisted suicide.”

1964 Barbara Fink Gardner writes “Hello to my former classmates, I hope all is well. My husband and I recently had knee replacements. We hope to continue traveling when we are fit.”

1965 Donna Donofrio Costanza “My husband Jerry and I are enjoying our two beautiful granddaughters. I work as the Accounting Manager for a major rehab and exercise product manufacturer and distributor. I would love to hear from other classmates.”

Teri Messina remembers her wonderful experiences at SCA that were coupled with a rich education.

1967 Jean Tinari Doyen writes, “Strong competition among other female students combined with educators grounded in strong morals, intellect and faith was very influential in the development of my leadership skills and in my career in nursing and now as a nurse practitioner. The real “ME” came to life at SCA!! I will always reflect fondly on those memories!”

1969 Josephine Theresa Poidomani Grimaldi writes, “Although I retired from SCA, I still continue to teach AP Spanish Literature.” Theresa and her husband celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary in June 2017. Theresa’s three grandchildren, Eddie (15), Natalia (11), and Evangelina (4), keep her quite busy.

1970 Diane Eve Russo works at Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc. This agency provides outpatient mental health/substance use and care management services to children, adolescents, adults and families.

1976 Patricia Stout Traina is currently working as the Director of the Learning Center for Nursing at the College of New Rochelle. Patricia is living in Cold Spring, NY with her family. She has 3 daughters in college and 2 sons who have graduated and are working in their respective fields.

1981 Christina Berti and her husband Peter are acclimating to an empty nest as their three children, Sophie (22), Perry (20) and Rosie (19), have left home for college. Sophie is teaching English at a high school in Puebla, Mexico on a Fulbright grant this year. Christina and Peter recently moved to a new home in Oceanport, NJ, where they enjoy watching sunsets on the water.

2008 Annette Stabile Torchetti recently became a guidance counselor at Cardinal Spellman High School. Annette married her SCA prom date on October 7, 2017.



2012 Krysta Camea Manayon is receiving a certification for Special Education from Pace University in May 2020. Krysta participates in a rigorous training program that focuses on continuous feedback and practice-based learning.

Ne’Asa Mitchell graduated magna cum laude from Old Dominion University in May 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Sociology with a social welfare emphasis. She is a second year student at Howard University School of Law in Washington D.C.

2013 Dominique Angell graduated UCLA in June 2017 and is now the Business Development Coordinator for the Hollywood Reporter and Billboard Magazine.

IN MEMORIAM

Adelaide Franco Greco ‘61
February 26, 2017

Marie DeSantis Marshall ‘59
April 6, 2017
Sister of Mildred DeSantis Fellin ‘61

Nancy Joy Wallander ‘60
August 28, 2017

Rosemary Curry Landrigan ‘52
September 12, 2017

James Farrell
December 19, 2017
Husband of Susan King Farrell ‘72

Suzanne Cavaluzzo
January 6, 2018
Mother of Danielle Cavaluzzo ‘15

Violet Edwards ‘77
January 18, 2018



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With special recognition to our 50th and 25th celebrants

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