



DeTOURS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF ST. MARTIN OF TOURS SCHOOL

WWW.SMSMD.ORG

SUMMER 2023

St. Martin's Class of 2023



Grace Agbleze

Mollie Alexander

Martin Almidon

Autumn Burkett

Aeribella Cajigal

Elye Carmona

Christopher Castro

Nathaniel De Mello

Jariel Galicia

Jordy Godoy

Clarksburg High School

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Damascus High School

Connelly School of the Holy Child

Northwest High School

DeMatha Catholic High School

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Undecided

Don Bosco Cristo Rey

St. John's Catholic Prep

Tanner Hahn

Isabel Hernandez

David Mensah

Emily Montalvo

Sean Moore

Angel Navarrete

Ryan Noll

Jason Rosewood

Daniela Salazar

Blake High School

Undecided

Undecided

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Gaithersburg High School

Don Bosco Cristo Rey

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Quince Orchard High School

Academy of the Holy Cross

Scholarship Recipients Honored

Awarded annually, these scholarships represent a commitment by our school community to our mission, anchored in faith, rooted in service, and dedicated to excellence.

Youstra Family Scholarship

This scholarship has been established as a tribute to Jo and Ray Youstra and their family, for their generous hearts and their many years of extraordinary service to St. Martin's. This scholarship benefits a rising eighth grader who has excelled academically, shown leadership qualities, participated in service projects, and demonstrated faith through character. We congratulate Mael Kpadenou, recipient of this year's scholarship.

Branagan Family Scholarship

The Branagan family has supported St. Martin's students for decades in helping them to reach their potential. This rising seventh grader demonstrated the most personal and academic growth through the course of the school year. Congratulations to this year's recipient, Nathaniel Rodriguez.

Carl Matthew Wacławik Memorial Scholarship Award

This scholarship was established in memory of Carl Wacławik, a graduate of the St. Martin's Class of 2006. This scholarship is awarded annually to help further the education of a St. Martin's middle school student. The recipient is to be an academically strong student of good character. Congratulations, Valentino Lacroix.

Annie B. Shaw Scholarship

This scholarship is named in memory of the grandmother of Kaitlyn Matsko, Class of 2017. It is awarded to a rising seventh or eighth grader who embodies exemplary academic effort and character. We congratulate Dannela Figueredo for receiving this recognition.

Mel Washington Memorial Youth Scholarship

This scholarship is named in memory of Melvin Washington, a leader in the Poolesville community who tirelessly served St. Mary's parish in Barnesville and the Knights of Columbus for decades. He was a great example of how to lead and to serve. This award benefits an African American youth who demonstrates model citizenship and academic effort. We congratulate Cheyenne Tavares, recipient of the awarded scholarship.

Parvesh K. Sharma Scholarship

This award supports and encourages middle school girls in their academic studies and character growth. Teeya Sahni, Class of 2018, generously funds this scholarship, which is named in honor of her late grandfather, Parvesh K. Sharma, a supporter of girls' rights and education. Congratulations to this year's recipient, Valentina Vigil.

J. Arlene Patti Memorial Youth Scholarship

This scholarship is in loving memory of Mrs. Patti, our office manager, in honor of her love for and commitment to St. Martin's. Her quiet but vibrant presence is and shall be greatly missed. The Patti family generously established this scholarship beginning in 2022-23. This award benefits an African American youth who demonstrates model citizenship and academic effort. We congratulate Nia Woodland for receiving this honor.

Edward J. and Helen Ann Hanner Memorial Scholarship

This inaugural scholarship is named in memory of the grandparents of Nora and Daniel Manyin, Classes of 2021 and 2026. Mr. and Mrs. Hanner believed strongly in family and in Catholic education. This award will help further the education of a St. Martin's rising 4th through 8th grade student who strives for academic achievement, demonstrates aptitude in the visual or musical arts, and shows an inclination toward serving others. We congratulate Therese Merene, recipient of the first awarded scholarship.

Please Support Our Students

To enable us to continue to support extraordinary students such as these award recipients, please consider contributing to one of these scholarships. To donate, please mail a check payable to St. Martin's School to 115 S. Frederick Avenue Gaithersburg, MD 20877. Be sure to include to which scholarship you are contributing. Thank you and we appreciate your support to St. Martin's and our students!

THANK YOU for Supporting Our Students!

Congratulations to our 8th Grade Scholarship Recipients. These students were offered more than \$278,000 combined for scholarships for the next four years in academic performance, leadership, service, and co-curricular achievement.

Autumn Burkett

The Connelly School of the Holy Child Merit Scholarship
Our Lady of Good Counsel Merit Scholarship
Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart Merit Scholarship

Elye Carmona

DeMatha Catholic John Walker Leadership Scholarship

David Mensah

DeMatha Catholic Father Cyrian Nusca Academic Scholarship

Emily Montalvo

Our Lady of Good Counsel St. Francis Xavier Scholarship

Daniela Salazar

The Academy of the Holy Cross Visual Arts Scholarship

New Named Scholarship

St. Martin's has a long tradition of generous members of our school community establishing named scholarships for the benefit of deserving students. We are pleased to announce that the Manyin family is generously establishing a new annual scholarship. The Edward J. and Helen Ann Hanner Memorial Scholarship is named in memory of the grandparents of Nora and Daniel Manyin, Classes of 2021 and 2026. Mr. and Mrs. Hanner believed strongly in family and in Catholic education. They dedicated their lives to service, including as a firefighter, nurse, and loving parents to four children. Mrs. Hanner also enjoyed playing the piano and painting. This award will help further the education of a St. Martin's rising 4th through 8th grade student who strives for academic achievement, demonstrates aptitude in the visual or musical arts, and shows an inclination toward serving others.



We celebrate and appreciate our generous alumni, parents, and friends of St. Martin's School who have established or support these various scholarships to the tremendous benefit of our students' academic, faith, art, and service aspirations. The need to support deserving students is great and we especially highlight these efforts in the hope they inspire others to consider helping change lives and build futures.

As I Say Goodbye by Aeribella Cajigal



"So let the light guide your way, hold every memory as you go and every road you take will always lead you home."
- Charlie Puth.

As I leave St. Martin's, I greatly ponder over the impact this school has made on me. I think about the people I met, the friends I made, the teachers that walked by my side throughout the time I spent here. Never once did I really think about leaving this school. Now as I write this, I realize I'm graduating, and I honestly don't know what to say. To me, it's bittersweet to say goodbye. Six years ago, I walked into this school, excited and nervous. This was a new beginning, a change after attending public school for four years. The first time I stepped into the fourth grade classroom, I was overwhelmed with a feeling of welcomeness. Everyone was so kind. I love St. Martin's due to its small community. To me, this school is home. You aren't just friends with your classmates, but friends with the whole school. Here everyone knows everyone. As an eighth grader, I realized other grades look up to us. Their individual high-fives and waves in the hallways or their nods of acknowledgement always sparked something for me. It made me happy to know that even though I'm leaving, I still will always have a big loving family here at St. Martin's. As I say goodbye, I reflect over my time at SMS, the skills I learned, the confidence I grew over the years, and the realization that you never really lose friends here. You make friends, maybe fight, but quickly resolve it. Despite how annoying and loud some of us may be, we remained family. We were a small class but had a considerable amount of care for each other.

One moment I'll never let slip from my memory happened in March and April of my seventh-grade year. For STEM Night, a group of us had to put on a play. Before I knew it, it was our big night. We sat in the library behind the tarp we painted. I don't think I'll ever forget how hot and sweaty it was, as we constantly opened the back door for air. Adrenaline pumped through us as the first announcement of "Carl's Journey to Taxonomy" could be heard throughout the school. As the library began to flood with people, our time soon arrived. "No, No, No, we are not the same. We may look alike, but we're different in many ways," is the memorable line I doubt I'll ever forget. As soon as our final showing ended, I thought how lucky I was to have been at this school and gotten the chance to write and perform this play with my fellow peers.

Something I found here which I definitely will take with me throughout the rest of my life is confidence. We all grew confident enough to trust the process. We had to be brave when the pandemic came around. Both the teachers and students had to learn how to make schooling as close to in-person classes as they could. Though we are not the first class to be given a traditional 8th grade graduation, I am still so glad we were able to receive one. St. Martin's has built my confidence greatly. From presentations to singing in front of crowds of people, I think we can all say some sort of confidence bloomed. St. Martin's made

me who I am today by giving me the opportunity to take on many leadership roles, whether it be helping with a script or going on to being student council president. I don't think that any other school could've helped me strengthen my growth mindset any better.

I was fortunate to spend five years of my life with eighteen obnoxious people. I saw these people every weekday, except for our usual winter and spring break and other days we had off. We learned, laughed, and dreaded tests together. They were there during the best moments of my life. They helped me through rough times and boosted me up through my brightest. They were always people I knew would understand and people I could talk to whenever I needed. I can't help but smile as I think about how much we've all grown, physically and mentally. Yet, growing is something we didn't do alone. We had role models, teachers we could turn to whenever we needed. The staff of St. Martin's are some of the kindest and most caring people I have ever met. I've had some of the best teachers in my lifetime at this school. What I like about the staff here is that none of them are what I would consider "bad teachers." Each and every one of them has their own way of teaching. Whether it be fill in the blank worksheets, note-taking, slide show presentations, or even running miles that would leave us sore the next day, they all had their wonderful ways of leaving a major impact on us. I'll never forget the novel-study journals Mr. Desmond loaded us with or even Mr. Stokes' seven paragraph notes. Each teacher we encountered at this school shaped our learning and intellectual growth. Honestly, I don't think I could ever thank them enough for all they've done for us, and I firmly believe they deserve a raise.



As I say goodbye, I would like to thank our parents and teachers. I have complete gratitude to our parents for choosing a school as wonderful as St. Martin's, and I thank our teachers for being there for us from our first day all the way to our last. As I say goodbye, I will forever remember my classmates. The people I have loved and cared for the past five years of my life. As we move on through our years and embark on our journey of high school, I am sure we will be on each other's minds once in a while. Autumn, Elye, Grace, Ryan, Jason, Martin, Jariel, Daniela, Mollie, Angel, Isabella, Isabel, Jordy, David, Nathaniel, Christopher, Sean, Tanner, even though this may be a goodbye, I know that this won't be our last.

As Rumi once said, "Goodbyes are for those who love with their eyes. Because for those who love with heart and soul there is no such thing as separation."

Ms. Stinger's Love Shines Through

It is not unusual to walk into Ms. Stinger's classroom and need to look around to find her, because she is often in the middle of a large group of students. When they huddle, she is usually teaching a skill such as an art technique, a stitch pattern in knitting, or telling a story which offers some commonsense advice about life. When alumni visit St. Martin's they often ask, "Is Ms. Stinger here?" because she will invite them to sit and reminisce about their years at St. Martin's and what their classmates are up to now. Through out her nineteen years at St. Martin's, and still today, she accepts everyone for who they are and makes them feel at home.

Her loving heart and desire to help have translated into many projects and clubs throughout the years; but this past school year, she has gone above and beyond a typical busy year. Perhaps it is a response to the inability to do these activities due to COVID, or perhaps she sees a need like never before.

Her day jobs are Art teacher, librarian, and middle school Religion teacher. In other years, she has taught Language Arts, keyboarding, been a Science and computer class assistant, and 6th grade homeroom teacher. Ms. Stinger explains, "Afterschool activities offer students the opportunity to explore a new interest and learn a new skill, in a less formal atmosphere." She adds, "Students benefit from these small groups because it encourages them to be more outgoing and make new friends."

Ms. Stinger re-introduced her Knitting Club this year. She established this club in 2008 when Andrea Villars (now our Spanish teacher and 8th grade homeroom teacher) was in her 6th grade homeroom class. Ms. Villars was recovering from knee surgery and could not join her classmates at recess. To keep her busy, Ms. Stinger offered to teach her how to knit. The next year, the club had thirty members, and half were boys. That year they made 500 hats, which were donated during the church's coat drive. "I am so proud of our efforts when I see people wearing those hats," she beams.

Provided with a suggestion from Wendy Woodland (a grandmother of two SMS students and an active volunteer for the City of Gaithersburg), Ms. Stinger and Pre-Kindergarten Aide Elida Gómez took classes from the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake about starting an environmental club. Armed with these new skills and resources, they created the Green Team in the fall and now have a dozen members. They have re-instituted recycling waste and started a vegetable and flower garden. "It has already changed our students' mindsets. I see them picking up paper and thinking of ways to re-use it," describes Ms. Stinger.



In January, Ms. Stinger enthusiastically described a book-buying initiative to our faculty, that would put at least one new book in the hands of every student. At the conclusion, the program had raised \$10,000 toward purchasing new books for students, with surplus funds to purchase books for our library. The initiative was so successful that each student took home not one but five new books to enjoy. One second grader explained, "I am so excited to have so many new books to read during summer break!" It was a little like Christmas morning watching students in each classroom open their packages full of exciting new books to take home. "Our students reap the benefits by having their own home library," remarked Ms. Stinger. Principal Lamont added, "Thanks to Ms. Stinger, our community rallied together to support these young readers."



Thanks to the leadership of Mr. Ben Desmond, our middle school Language Arts teacher, we were able to reinstitute the Drama Club as an after-school activity this year. The play they selected to perform was "The Claw," a new children's musical. As with any performance, a team of collaborators is required. Ms. Stinger

generously took on several roles thanks to her skills and expertise. As the Creative Director, with a crew of six, she was responsible for costumes, scenery, and the program. "I especially enjoyed seeing the students express their creative talents and imaginations, as both actors and crew members," Ms. Stinger commented. The play was an impressive production, well attended and exceptionally performed.

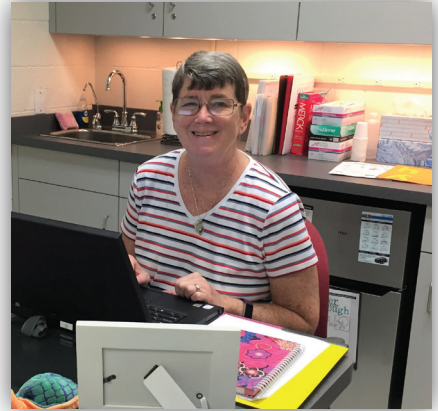
The minute the classroom doors close for the academic year, our STREAM-based Camp Crusaders, led by Ms. Stinger, will welcome our students back for the summer. Campers will enjoy theme-based weeks such as Legos, Disney, and the Fun of Science.

Ms. Stinger puts her final imprint on the school year as editor of the Yearbook. Students enjoy looking back on a year full of activities and events, many made possible by her love for St. Martin's and its students. Thanks to Ms. Stinger and our dedicated faculty and staff, each year is full of unique opportunities and experiences for students, which many delightedly remember for years to come.



Our Jill of All Trades Retires

We wish our school nurse, Amy Tolan, the very best as she retires at the end of this school year. We have been gratefully benefitting from Nurse Amy's many years of prior pediatric nursing experience during her seven years at St. Martin's. We have been appreciative of her commitment to the health care of our school community. But to fully recognize all the ways in which Nurse Amy has helped our community throughout these years, we would have to ask each faculty member, staff member, student, and parent, because practically no one's answer would be the same. We have referred to her as our "Jill of all trades" because if something needs to get done, she is there to do it – from helping with patrols to helping plan school Masses, to organizing class picture day, to serving lunches, to monitoring recess, to setting up for the book fair, to serving on the gala committee, to helping with administrative tasks, to supporting music shows, to organizing staff hospitality activities, to picture taking, to working behind the scenes to support graduation (just to name a few), Nurse Amy has always volunteered and served for the good of the school. We take this opportunity to recognize not just her service and commitment, but also the wonderful and welcoming school environment she has helped to foster. We wish Nurse Amy good health and happiness as her next chapter in life begins!



St. Martin's Carnival – Fun for Everyone!

The St. Martin's Carnival Fun Fair, held on Saturday, April 29 at Gaithersburg Elementary School, was a blast! The months of planning, organizing, and challenging work came together to create a one-of-a-kind fun family event. Over three hundred attendees, young and youthful at heart, entered under a multi-colored balloon arch, and were greeted with carnival music and the sweet smell of cotton candy. Families who had registered were handed a bag of carnival-inspired swag, a brightly colored program including a map, and tickets for all the fun. The tickets allowed guests to play over a dozen different games of chance, jump on one of two moon bounces, enjoy hot dogs, popcorn, and lemonade, and try their luck at the cake walk. Activities included tattoo painting, racing yellow rubber ducks named after favorite teachers, corn hole, and the cup stacking challenge. The Silent Auction offered amazing items such as exotic trips, class baskets, Principal and Nurse for the Day experiences,

and the latest technology gadgets. Although the event was an opportunity for the entire school community to be together and have fun, it was also a successful fundraiser for future school projects and programs. We are appreciative of our school families, sponsors, donors, and underwriters for their partnership and continued support of our mission.

J. Arlene Patti Memorial Garden

As we considered ways to memorialize Mrs. Arlene Patti, our beloved office manager, coworker, and friend on the first anniversary of her return to the Lord, the idea of a garden quickly surfaced and gained support. A January fundraiser for the project provided an opportunity for all in our community to donate in honor of Mrs. Patti and her amazing contribution to our school. A committee was formed to design the outside space, and Ms. Julie Stinger, Mrs. Elida Gómez, and Mr. Leonel Arreaga (father of two of our students) worked together to imagine and plan out a quiet, reflective garden we can visit to seek comfort and inspiration. The space is filled with flowering plants and bushes, highlighting her preference for purple and inviting the presence of butterflies. A stone path leads to the centerpiece of the garden, which is a granite bench, engraved with Mrs. Patti's name and a Bible verse that was special to her.

On the morning of May 8, following a Mass dedicated to the repose of Mrs. Patti's soul on the anniversary of her death, the faculty, staff, and students gathered outside in the sun to dedicate the beautiful butterfly garden. We were joined by our pastor, Fr. David Wells, Mrs. Patti's family, and members of our school and parish community who wished to honor her memory. Principal Stephen Lamont, Mr. Don Patti, and Nurse Amy Tolan spoke about Mrs. Patti's loving demeanor, her comforting presence, and her calming influence on those around her. They remembered her for the simple acts of kindness, cheerful smile, helpful ways, and compassionate spirit which gifted every member of the community, from the youngest to the oldest. As we remember Mrs. Patti and visit her garden to pray and to reflect, we are inspired by the words of the Bible verse that graces the memorial bench, and grateful that Mrs. Patti chose to live and serve this way – "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).



Congratulations to the Class of 2019!

Mia Branham

Graduated from the Academy of the Holy Cross. Will attend Drexel University in Philadelphia in the fall, in their five-year cooperative education program with a concentration in Environmental Studies and Sustainability.

Simon Cooksey

Graduated from Our Lady of Good Counsel. Will attend Middle Tennessee State University in the fall, majoring in Audio Production.

Thomas Fegley

Graduated from Quince Orchard High School. Will attend the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in the fall, majoring in Business Analytics. Received a four-year Volunteer Scholarship for exemplary academic record.

Jack Griffith

Graduated from Watkins Mill High School. Will attend Towson University in the fall, majoring in Computer Science.

Mao LaMatteo, Jr.

Graduated from Our Lady of Good Counsel. Participated in the STEM Program. Will attend Hofstra University in the fall, majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

Samson Lynch

Graduated from Poolesville High School. Will attend Pennsylvania State University in the College of Liberal Arts in the fall.

Madeline McClure

Graduated from Clarksburg High School. Will attend Towson University in the fall, majoring in English, and minoring in Electronic Media and Film.

Julien Payen

Graduated from Watkins Mill High School. He recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout with St. Martin's Boy Scouts Troop 926. In addition, Julien has been a key member of the WMHS Tennis team, which won the division championship last year. Will attend the University of Wisconsin in Madison in the fall, majoring in Journalism, with an emphasis on Sports Journalism/Broadcasting. He received a four-year Posse Scholarship for extraordinary academic and leadership potential.

Joseph Peralta

Graduated from Our Lady of Good Counsel. Will attend the University of Maryland, Baltimore in the fall, majoring in Cyber Security.

Andrew Subida

Graduated from Poolesville High School. Will attend Notre Dame of Maryland University in the fall, majoring in Biology.

In Memoriam

St. Martin's School community remembers Sheila Shukla who went to the Lord on November 26, 2022. Mrs. Shukla was our Reading Resource and ELL teacher from 1998 to 2009. She also taught CCD in the Parish Religious Education Program. She was a conscientious and dedicated teacher who had a strong commitment to her Catholic faith. We remember Mrs. Shukla's kind and generous spirit. She would often return from her trips to India with a variety of small gifts for each of the teachers. Mrs. Shukla is survived by her daughter Dominique and her two sons, Neil (SMS Class of 1996) and Jay (SMS Class of 1998). She was preceded in death by her husband, Vinod Shukla, in May 2022.

A teacher is one of the greatest blessings of the Lord. Her life was a blessing, and her memory will always be with us. May she rest in peace.

By Roxanne Moore



Endowment Funds: Honor Roll of Donors

Every Gift Matters. Every Giver Makes an Impact.

We thank our alumni, parents, parishioners, and friends for their generous support of our School Operating and Financial Aid Endowment Funds this past year. It is the collective impact of our entire community – including you – that enables us to continue to deliver on our mission. The principal of each Fund is invested responsibly in line with our Catholic values. The interest generated from the Operating Fund helps defray the cost of a Catholic education that tuition revenue alone does not cover. The interest generated from the Financial Aid Fund provides financial assistance to students who could not otherwise afford a St. Martin's education. These investments allow your generosity to make a difference year after year.

Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to our School Operating Fund or to our Financial Aid Fund. On the envelope enclosed, please check the box to designate which Fund should receive your generous donation.

The Honor Roll of Donors includes gifts donated to the Funds from June 16, 2022 – June 15, 2023. If an error or omission has been made, we apologize and ask that you contact Jennifer Mohrbacher, Office Manager, at office@smsmd.org.



Honor Roll of Donors 2022-23

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