



DeTours

The Newsletter for Friends of St. Martin of Tours School

Fall 2015

www.smsmd.org

St. Martin of Tours 90th Anniversary Celebration

Over one hundred and eighty friends, family and guests met on Friday, October 9th at the Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg, Maryland to celebrate nine decades of Saint Martin's School. Nicole Garner served as Master of Ceremonies, introducing Honorable Winston Wilkinson, Chief of Staff for Maryland Governor's Office of Community Initiatives. He read a proclamation from Governor Hogan commending the school and its faculty for being the oldest Catholic school in Montgomery County. The Honorable Jud Ashman, Mayor of the City of Gaithersburg also took the stage and commended the school's ongoing commitment to educating children in the faith, service and scholarship and named October 9th, Saint Martin's Day.

After Monsignor Mark Brennan gave the invocation, everyone enjoyed a sit down dinner and watched a new video showcasing the history, the community and the alumni of the school. Principal Andrew Piotrowski took the time to honor people who through their years of dedication and service, have really helped Saint Martin's to thrive.

Honorees were:

Lisa Schuler, Spirit of Saint Martin's
Josephine and Raymond Youstra, Friends of Saint Martin's
Lorraine McNamara, Young Alumni
Edward Branagan III, Distinguished Alumni

Edward Branagan III sent a video offering his thanks, as his sister Natalie accepted the award.

The guest speaker of the night was Dr. Thomas Burnford, Secretary for Education in the Archdiocese of Washington. He spoke of how when Pope Benedict came to Washington in 2008, he spoke to Catholic educators at Catholic University of America. He said, "First and foremost, every Catholic educational institution (including St. Martin of Tours) is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth." Dr. Burnford then reminded everyone of Pope Francis's recent visit to the states and the word associated with this Pope over and over again, "Encounter." Pope Francis "encounters" the poor, the needy, he calls people, and he learns first names. He wants to know the person he is meeting, even if it is only for a moment. Everyone is paying attention to the Pope paying attention to these people because he's the pope.

"We were blessed to have the Holy Father come to DC for three days, but every day here in this school, for the past 90 years and the next 90 years, students have and will encounter Jesus through all those committed to this special mission of Catholic Education." Catholic schools allow ongoing encounters, ongoing opportunities for encountering Jesus. The children meet Jesus in the sacraments, in the scripture, in the discussions across

curriculum, and in the people involved in the school: "the pastor, the principal, and the teachers, the staff, the parent volunteers, all the parents and alumni, and parishioners."

He closed with a special announcement from the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for Monsignor Brennan and Mr. Piotrowski, a letter stating that Saint Martin of Tours School has met the eligibility requirements for the National Blue Ribbon Award, based on the 2015 fall Scantron assessment results. This means that Saint Martin's has achieved a level of academic excellence, placing it in the top 15% of schools across the country.

The evening closed with dessert and dancing, with everyone getting onto the dance floor to show off their moves. One of the honorees, Jo Youstra had only recently been released home after some serious health issues. Her daughter, Maria Rose Cain took her out on the dance floor for the "Last dance." It was a perfect moment, the end of a very lovely evening.



All School Mass and Pot Luck

Saturday, October 10th, the 90th Anniversary Weekend finished up with a bi-lingual mass celebrated by Bishop Holley. Students attending wore their dress uniforms and served as the altar servers, lectors, ushers and choir. The Bishop took the time to call people to recognize how they were part of the story of Saint Martin's, how their presence in the school now, was part of the ninety years of continuous service, and that the families who sent their children to school, were sacrificing everything to follow Jesus, to introduce their children to Christ.



Following the mass, families were invited to a free pot-luck dinner in the gymnasium, where they could sit and enjoy a feast and support the school through the fifty-fifty raffle.



Photo credits on this page: CarlosMonzonPhotography

90th Anniversary Celebration Honorees



Distinguished Alumni Award: Edward Branagan III

Edward Branagan III is a graduate of the class of 1995. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary, and a Master's degree from Johns Hopkins University. Currently, he serves as the Associate Dean for Administration,

Finance and Student Affairs at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. He also serves as Executive Director and Co-Founder of Global Playground.

Founded in 2006, Global Playground's mission is to raise awareness and share resources with people of the developing world to create educational opportunities where they do not exist. While traveling as students to developing countries, Edward and his classmate Douglas Bunch, were struck by the lack of education infrastructure and how over-crowded and inefficient the existing schools were. From that point they set a goal to help the greatest number of children with the least access to primary school. Since that time, Global Playground has partnered with organizations in Cambodia, Honduras, Thailand, Uganda, Myanmar and the Philippines to build schools and other educational buildings such as youth facilities, libraries, and athletic fields that are self-sustained. Edward is putting into practice his beliefs that education is the most promising means to eliminate poverty, violence, and intolerance in our world today.



Young Alumni: Lorraine McNamara

Lorraine McNamara graduated from Saint Martin's in 2014. An honor student at Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac, this sophomore and her partner, Quinn Carpenter began competing in National and International Ice Dancing in 2006. This past year, they were awarded the gold at the U.S. Junior

National Championships, Lake Placid Ice Dance Championships and the Junior Grand Prix in Colorado Springs. They also won the silver medal at the 2015 World Junior Figure Skating Championship in Estonia. Her dedication to the sport reflects discipline and courage, while her ongoing success in academics reveals a cultivated love of learning and desire for excellence. She reflects well the values of her family, and of Saint Martin's.



Spirit of Saint Martin's: Lisa Schuler

Lisa Schuler served both the parish and the school since becoming part of the community when her children first enrolled. Lisa worked as Parish Council chair for two terms, fundraised for the renovation of the food pantry building, assisted with grant writing, served on

the school board two terms, and as a Girl Scout leader for her daughter's troop for eight years. These generous gifts of time and talent reveal her commitment to the Saint Martin's community. She is honored for her spearheading of the development for the past twelve years. During her tenure as Development Committee chair, she helped the school reach its initial goals of \$100,000, \$200,000, \$300,000 and even over \$400,000. Through initiatives like the second collection, networking with businesses and alumni, and her ongoing promotion of the Endowment as a means of supporting the school, she's helped take the endowment of Saint Martin's from an idea to a reality.



Friends of St. Martin's: Ray and Jo Youstra

Jo and Ray Youstra have worked and volunteered in support of Saint Martin's School for over two decades. For years, you would see Jo helping around the school, in the library, hanging work in the hallways, and tutoring students in the classroom. She also served as the editor and producer of DeTours and as a year

round member of the Auction committee. Ray Youstra taught science to the middle school for many years, organized and still runs the Drama club and also still serves as a tutor.

Their official roles, as listed in yearbooks, or service hours, are dwarfed by the time they spent simply serving the school community behind the scenes. The Youstras are known for their willing service and generous hearts. For several years donated computers to SMS (their donations were matched by IBM). They gave generously to the annual auction, Breakfast with Santa secret shop, Catholic School's Week Bingo prizes and annual school food drive. Without many knowing, they bought school supplies for struggling students; when they heard a student was sleeping on the floor, they bought a bed. Over the years, they've been known to buy new coats, pay students' field trip fees and provide Christmas gifts and First Communion dresses. They did all of this, out of love for Christ, this parish, and this school. Whenever they heard of a need, they tried to help.



Dear St. Martin's School Community,

As the new Development Coordinator, I am excited to be joining a community of alumni, parents, parishioners, faculty and staff that strongly supports Catholic education. A Catholic education is one of the most important gifts a family can give its children.

As the oldest Catholic school in Montgomery County, St. Martin's has always been committed to putting children first, to giving them the education, the values, and the gifts that they need to succeed. St. Martin's is about families and teachers working together for our children's futures, giving them a solid foundation as they strive toward their full potential. I am confident through St. Martin's supportive community that we will be doing so for many years to come.

We must be mindful to remain on solid financial ground so we can protect our mission in challenging times and leverage opportunities in good times. My work will focus on developing best practices for growing our Endowment Fund. This plan will include improving alumni and donor relations, broadening funding opportunities such as planned giving, and corporate matching donations. Once we reach our goal of \$500,000, the interest from this investment will provide tuition assistance to families with demonstrated financial need. Your contribution plays a vital role in our efforts to provide financial support to families that might otherwise be unable to send their children to St. Martin's.

Whether it is because of character development, academic excellence, Catholic identity, or a sense of community, unique, life-changing opportunities are taking place at St. Martin's every day. When you give to the Endowment Fund, you give the gift of Catholic education which will benefit children for a lifetime. We continue to embrace this mission thanks to the love and support of our alumni, parents, parishioners, and friends of St. Martin's.

With gratitude,
Anne Gemunder
Development Coordinator

Remember when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received—only what you have given
--Francis of Assisi

Our Children Greet Pope Francis



It was an experience of a life-time for six St. Martin's School children. On Tuesday, September 22 they boarded a bus with children from our Parish's Religious Education program and our Youth Group along with Principal Andrew Piotrowski. They headed to D.C. and the Apostolic Nunciature of the Holy See to the United States on Massachusetts Avenue, NW, effectively the Vatican's embassy. This stately Georgian house across from the vice president's residence at the Naval Observatory would be Pope Francis's home away from Rome during his visit to D.C.

After going through an extensive security check, they waited excitedly and with great anticipation outside the front door to greet the Holy Father when he arrived at the residence. Pope Francis's plane flew in from Cuba to Joint Base Andrews at 4 p.m. that afternoon. After being greeted by President Obama, the Pope rode in a modest black Fiat, sandwiched by much larger security vehicles to the ambassador's residence.

There were several hundred children standing along the grassy edges of the driveway peering over the bushes in hope to get that first glimpse of the Pope. When his small sedan pulled in just before 5 p.m., the children began singing "Bienvenido Papa Francisco" as a greeting to him. The St. Martin's students leaned forward on the large metal fencing to get a better view as he stepped out of the car. Six grader Ian Javelosa said "words can't describe the emotions I felt" as he first laid eyes on Pope Francis. The Holy Father gave the children a blessing and a warm wave before turning and entering the residence. Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, later came over to the children, shaking their hands and thanking them for coming. At the end of the day, Ian expressed how blessed he was to have seen the Pope and to have met Cardinal Wuerl on that beautiful fall day. This was a wonderful experience for these St. Martin's children and one they will not soon forget.

My Stuff Service Project

Saint Martin's School has always emphasized the virtue of stewardship via service to others. The kids each year collect cans for the food pantry, the older children volunteer with the soup kitchen in preparation for Confirmation, and every year participate in raising money for the mission in Togo, the angel fund, the Parish coat drive, and numerous other outreaches to the poor, suffering and needy. The ninetieth anniversary of the school could not be properly celebrated without a project reflecting this fundamental value of Catholicism and the community that is Saint Martin's School.

Under the supervision of sixth grade teacher Ms. Julie Stinger, the "My Stuff" project began. Each class would collect ninety items for 90 cinch sacks to be given out to children to be placed in foster homes due to crisis situations. The bags would include a journal, pen, a wash cloth and hand towel, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, a brush, comb, tooth brush, tooth paste, hand sanitizer, lotion, water and a snack. The students also made hand drawn notes of encouragement, like "You are a winner!" "Never Give Up!" and "We're Thinking



about you. We're praying for you. –Love, a Saint Martin's Student"

Susanne Shook and Wendy Grier from Child Welfare Services of Montgomery County visited the school and received the ninety bags for 90 years. Wendy said "Children sometimes come to us with nothing, and the foster parents don't always have time to prepare for receiving a new kid." Susanne talked about how receiving something like the "My Stuff" bags can make this very difficult moment, when a child has to leave owing to safety issues, less dark, less difficult.

The celebration of service concluded with the whole student body singing "Friends are like Flowers," and blue and white cupcakes. Mrs. Shook and Mrs. Grier thanked Saint Martin's students for their generous gift to children they don't know. "For many of the kids who will receive these bags, this will feel like Christmas morning."



October is Fire Safety Month



In honor of Fire Safety Month, Lieutenants Dave Kennedy and Irvin Smith from Montgomery County Fire and Rescue came and gave our Pre-K through 3rd grade students a wonderful presentation about fire safety. Students were excited to get to interact with the firefighters and see a fire truck close up. The firefighters spoke about the importance of smoke detectors and the dangers of matches and stoves. A highlight for all was watching Principal Andrew Piotrowski try on the fireman's boots, pants, jacket, helmet, and mask.

NBA All-Star Performance



St. Martin's School was pleased to welcome NBA All-Star performer Joe Odhiambo to an all-school assembly. Mr. Odhiambo is a 12-time Guinness World Record Holder. He shared his tricks along with his message that all people can succeed by having faith in themselves, persistence, patience, responsibility, and by working hard. Many of the teachers and students in pre-K through 8th grade became part of the act. The morning was fun and inspiring for all.

Character Counts Essay Winners



Congratulations to St. Martin's 8th graders Layla Abudayeh, Benjamin Bell, and Jordan A. Raffo for being 3 out of the 5 winners in The City of Gaithersburg and the Gaithersburg Rotary Club Character Counts Essay Contest!

Elementary and middle school students were asked to reflect upon and write about a person they admire and the value and ethics their "hero" exemplifies based on the 6 Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.

Layla Abudayeh - Adult Hero: Mrs. Helene Redmond, 8th Grade Teacher

Benjamin Bell - Adult Hero: Father Mark Brennan, Pastor

Jordan A. Raffo - Adult Hero: Luzmila Fernandez, Grandmother

Students Tackle STEM Challenge



Amazing Afternoons are underway again at St. Martin's! 6th, 7th and 8th grade students met a STEM challenge in which they had 30 minutes to engineer an hourglass that would accurately measure one minute. They planned their designs, then tested as they proceeded. Adjustments were made and were repeated. Students experimented with a variety of materials as they explored how the size and shape of the containers, the size of the particles, and the size of the hole affected how long the timer ran.

Ways to Help Support St. Martin's School



Help us help our kids! Please take advantage of this opportunity to donate to St. Martin's. Enrollment in the United Way and the Combined Federal Campaigns for 2016.

SMS is proud to be part of the UW and the CFC, but we can only receive these funds with your help. If your workplace participates in either campaign and you would like your tax deductible contribution to be directed to SMS, **please designate us by entering our number on your donor form.** Deductions are spread out over the year so only a little comes out of your check each pay period. **PLEASE NOTE: Even if your employer does not participate in these campaigns, you can still donate by going directly to the UW or CFC websites and following the instructions.*

- **United Way (Member #8362):** <http://www.unitedwaynca.org/> (Click on the donate button at top right)
- **Combined Federal Campaign (Member #85449):** <http://www.cfcna.org/donors/donate-now/donate-tool>



Now you can **help support SMS when you do all your Amazon shopping.** Just follow the link below and designate St. Martin of Tours School as your designated charity. Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase back to SMS. Remember you will need to shop through [Smile.Amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) each time, but the system will prompt you in case you forget. (<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0591446>)



Giant Program: Please sign up for Giant's A+ BonusBucks program! From October through April, Giant customers can help their school earn cash each time they shop. For more information or to obtain your Giant A+ number call: 877 ASK APLUS (877 275-2758) or visit: www.giantfood.com/aplus. St. Martin's school code is 00801.

Target's Take Charge of Education Program: If you have a Target credit card, enroll your card at Target.com/tcoe or 800-316-6142 and select St. Martin's. Every time you use your card, Target donates up to 1% of your purchases to St. Martin's.

St. Martin's Vehicle Donations: Call the hotline: 800-456-5517 Cars, Trucks, RVs, Boats, Trailers, Motorcycles, Snowmobiles, Airplanes, Farm and Construction Equipment

GoodShop / GoodSearch sends St. Martin's money every time a SMS family uses it to do their internet searching and shopping. To join, use the following link: www.goodsearch.com/nonprofit/st-martin-of-tours-school-gaithersburg.



Clip/Save Box Top Submissions. Collection box in school lobby.

Make a Difference to a Child Today

St. Martin's alumni, parents, parishioners, and friends have given strong support to the school over the years and we thank you. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to our St. Martin's School Endowment Fund. The principal investment will be preserved; only the interest will be used. In this way, your generosity will make a difference year after year. Your investment will help give the gift of Catholic education to those families with financial need. With your help, we can reach our goal of \$500,000 (currently \$425,000).

Many thanks to our generous donors for their contributions to the Endowment Fund.

Contributions since June 15, 2015 and from our 90th Anniversary Appeal:

Paul and Maureen Baltay	Thomas and Anne McNamara
Edward Branagan III	Fr. Michael Mellone
Patrick and Jeanene Burke	Martha Novelly
Bob and Barbara Christin	Peter and Lorrie Plamondon
Scott and Laura Crown	PortfolioFirst Parking Solutions
Leticia Doto de Leon	Ellen Pulupa
Alice Dillon	Robert A. Pumphrey
Elaine Duncanson	Pumphrey Funeral Homes, Inc.
Louise Elmquist	Pat and Kris Quinn
Annmarie Emmet	Jose Sebastain Rivera
Francis X. Emmet	The Schuler Family
Ruth Escobar	Peter Sheehan, DDS
The Fegley Family	John and Bridget Siedlecki
Gretchen Ann Fegley	William E. Toner
Veronica Fernando	Adolfo Vezza
Jackie Froelich	Phil and Meg Waclawik
Brad and Nicole Garner	Diane White
Ricardo and Elida Gomez	
Robert and Maria Harboom	Mary Alyce Sullivan
James and Jane Healy	Scholarship Fund:
Karyn Hollins	Charles and Lee Ann Costanzo
Gerald and Sheila Jackson	Robert and Kathleen Harper
Paul Lauria	Cathleen Lennon
James and Kristen Masciotti	Francis Lennon and Laura Kampo
The McClure Family	Thomas and Susan Lennon

Join Us for These Upcoming Events

Contact school office for event details at 301-990-2441 or office@smsmd.org

- * Book Fair-Dec. 3, 8:30 am-8 pm & Dec. 4, 7:30-11:30 am
- * Saturday with Santa-Dec. 5, 9 am
- * Christmas Music Program-Dec. 15, 7 pm
- * Open House-Jan. 26, 9 am-1 pm
- * Auction, Dinner, and Dance-March 12, 6-11 pm
- * Annual Endowment Appeal Weekend-April 16-17, All Masses
- * Grandparents' Day-April 29, Breakfast then Mass
- * May Procession-May 2, 10 am
- * Spring Musical & Art Show-May 17, 7pm
- * Parish Picnic-June 5

Keep Up-to-date on St. Martin's School Online

Check out our website at www.smsmd.org for calendar of events, newsletters, downloadable forms, homework, and volunteer opportunities and much more! Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/smsmd.org and "Share" us with your friends.



Yes, I want to help St. Martin's School by making a gift today.

*CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of Alum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alum, Class of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty/Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent of: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Cell # _____ Home # _____

Email _____

- Would you prefer to receive the *DeTours* by email? Be sure to include your email.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____. (Make check payable to St. Martin's School)

- Visa MasterCard

Card Number _____ Exp Date _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____

- My employer will match my gift to St. Martin's School. The appropriate form is enclosed.

Name and address of company _____

Please mail to: Endowment Fund/St. Martin's School at 115 S. Frederick Avenue Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Donors will be noted in the next issue of *DeTours* unless you wish to remain anonymous. Questions? Contact Anne Gemunder at agemunder@smsmd.org or 301-990-2441

*Alumnus/Alumna? Please tell us about your change of address, new job or promotion, travel, awards, advanced degrees, marriage, anniversaries, or birth/adoptions. We will include it in our Class Notes in our next *DeTours*. Or email news to: agemunder@smsmd.org.

Name and Graduation Year:

*Parents of Alumni? Is your son or daughter no longer living with you permanently? If not, we would love to have his/her current address/email so we can stay connected. Or email update to agemunder@smsmd.org.

Alumnus/Alumna Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

***Give now for
end-of-year tax
deduction.**