

Santa Maria School
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Santa Maria School is a Roman Catholic School whose mission to educate its students is inspired by the gospel of Jesus Christ and grounded in the teachings of the Church. Santa Maria seeks to develop a community of learners centered in prayer, worship and service. Committed to excellence, Santa Maria strives to foster a life-long love for learning, and is dedicated to the spiritual, intellectual, physical and moral development of each child, so as to form responsible citizens.

Thank You For Supporting Santa Maria School

We are deeply grateful for your support. A gift of any amount will make a difference in our students' lives.

- \$1,000:** Scholarship for a deserving Santa Maria student
- \$500:** Academic field trip for one class
- \$250:** Supplies for the Fine Arts Center

Name _____ Phone & Email _____

Address _____ Class of _____

Enclosed is a check payable to **Santa Maria School** in the amount of \$ _____

Please charge my credit card for the amount of \$ _____ (circle one) Visa MC AMEX

Card number _____ Expiration Date _____ CSC _____

Cardholder Name _____ Signature _____

Please restrict my gift to the following use (if any) _____

*All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
 You will receive written acknowledgement of your donation.*

Please send checks to:
 Santa Maria School
 Attn: Development
 1510 Zerega Avenue
 Bronx, NY 10462

Summer 2010

Volume 4, Issue 2

Principal's Corner

Dear Friends,

The summer is a time for reflection on the past school year, and I am proud to report on our many successes. We have raised over \$100,000 to replace the school's aging boiler, a project that we will complete by fall 2010. The Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program for four year olds continues to boost enrollment higher than ever before. School supporters have made possible field trips to the New York Philharmonic, museums, nature centers, the New York Botanical Garden, and more. We are truly grateful to our families, alumni, and other friends for all they do.

Though it's summer, we at Santa Maria are eagerly preparing for the 2010-2011 academic year. Look to hear more about exciting developments in enrichment programming in the December newsletter. Until then, may you have a restful summer and productive start to the fall.

Sincerely,
 Sr. Diane Mastroianni, ASCJ

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Santa Maria School Impressions

A Newsletter for the Families, Alumni, and Friends of Santa Maria School

\$108,000 Raised to Complete Heating System Upgrades

Santa Maria School is proud to announce that we have raised the funds necessary to complete Phase II of heating system upgrades. The 3rd Annual Wine Tasting Benefit proceeds plus the grant award from the Endowment for Inner-City Education and gifts from other committed donors combine to make up the \$108,000 project cost.



School Patrons Deborah and Richard Brennan with Principal Sr. Diane Mastroianni

In the summer of 2009, Santa Maria completed Phase I of heating upgrades and replaced several key system components. However, this past winter the boiler began leaking steam and hot water, which reduced heating efficiency and created a safety hazard. We will now replace the rusty iron boiler with a sleek steel model. This will ensure the effective operation of Santa Maria's heating system for many years to come.

The 3rd Annual Spring Wine Tasting at Moore Brothers Wine Company was a big help in our reaching this fundraising goal. The evening raised \$10,500 and welcomed over 50 guests who enjoyed a guided wine tasting, silent auction, and hors d'oeuvres. For many, the evening's highlight was when 8th grader Eena shared a few words.

"Santa Maria School is like my home away from home," said Eena. "The faculty, staff, and fellow students are supportive and truly caring. They have helped me

("Wine Tasting" continued on page 2)

Help Make Our Dreams Come True

- Scholarship for a deserving Santa Maria student: **\$1,000**
- Academic field trip for one class: **\$500**
- Supplies for the Fine Arts Center: **\$250**

*You will find a detachable contribution form on the last page of the newsletter.
 For more information please contact the Development Office at
 (718) 823-3636 ext. 5 or santa.maria.development@gmail.com*

("Wine Tasting" continued from page 1)

develop into a well-rounded individual. I am truly grateful to have had the chance to attend Santa Maria and want to express my sincerest appreciation to everyone here. Thank you for supporting my education and my whole school."

Board Member Debra Saito was enthusiastic about the event. "The evening was a smashing success and my colleagues and friends still talk about it. I am truly impressed by Eena and all of the other students I have met. Santa Maria is a family, and everyone involved is a better person for it."

An \$80,000 Endowment grant and \$18,000 from other committed donors covers the project's remaining expense. Our sincerest thank you to the Endowment, other donors, and the Wine Tasting's guests and supporters!



Sr. Diane Mastroianni with Board Members Brian McGowan, Courtney Carson, and Kallie Steffes

3rd Annual Wine Tasting Guests and Supporters

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Anthony Baldino | John and Ellen Frawley | Jessica Polebaum |
| Thomas Barry | Michael Glantz | Joseph Rizk |
| Tasnim Battles | Amanda Goodwin | Debra and Eisuke Saito |
| Maxwell and Sally Belding | Bridget Habib | Ryan Schafer |
| Aditya Bhat | Samantha Hilbert | Brian Shearer |
| Cantey Boyd | Audrey Huzenis | Kallie Steffes |
| Ryan Brennan | Avery LaChance | Brooks and Diane Tanner |
| Richard and Deborah Brennan | Kyle Landman | Tim Taylor |
| Henry Briance | Danielle LeBenger | Kevin Thalmann |
| Ted Burdick | Terrell Levine | Meghan Tighe |
| Gregory Cahill | Taber Lightbourne | Laura Lee Timko |
| Regina Cappio | John Littzi | Philip Tracy |
| Courtney Carson | Mark Longstreth | Kyle Travers |
| Christina Celi | Brian McGowan | Sean Tyrer |
| Jennifer Ciullo | Konstantin Medvedovsky | Chad and Marietta Valerio |
| Matt Clare | Justin Minieri | James Vaughan |
| Anthony Daniel | Tom Moloney | Jayson Villalobos |
| Jackie Day | Geraldine Monteleone | Jennifer Walford |
| Jason Del Rey | Melanie Moss | David Ward |
| Robert Dineen | Scott and Andrea Nagel | Amanda Westbrook |
| Murray Dry | Eugene Nardelli | Michael Wooldridge |
| Margaret Egan | Tom and Ruth Nardini | Nicholas Yglesias |
| Ben Elga | Stephen Palmese | |
| Richard Fay | John Petro | |

Viacom Volunteers Mentor the 4th Grade



Students and chaperones gaze at a dinosaur fossil

For Santa Maria students, what's even more exciting than a field trip? A field trip chaperoned by Nickelodeon, MTV, and VH1 employees! On April 30th, 25 Viacom employees accompanied the 4th grade to the American Museum of Natural History on the Upper West Side.

Each student partnered with a Viacom mentor and completed a museum scavenger hunt. In the process, they explored the Universe, Dinosaur, African Mammal, and Aquatic Life Exhibits. Students and chaperones had ample time to get to know one another and discuss their educational and professional aspirations.

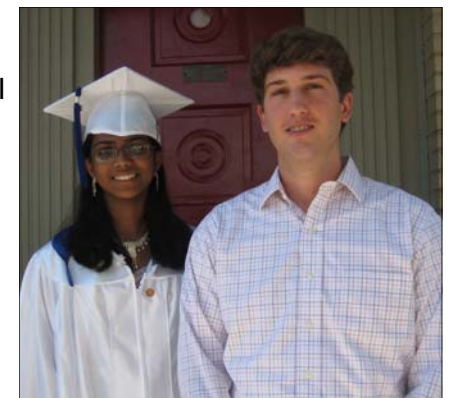
Says 4th grader Christian, "The best part was seeing the Hall of Aquatic Life. There were neat fish and a huge whale. It was also really fun to spend time with my buddy and talk about his job. It gave me ideas for my future. I hope to see my buddy again!"

Fourth grade teacher Anne Fanzo thought the trip was "absolutely wonderful." She said, "The students loved the Viacom chaperones, who were enthusiastic and worked so well with the kids. Plus, the exhibits visited complemented and expanded on their studies. This was an experience the students will always remember."

Many thanks to the chaperones and to Viacom for organizing the event and underwriting the day's costs!

8th Graders Attend Top Catholic High Schools

On a bright and warm Saturday in June, Santa Maria's 8th graders became the school's youngest alumni. Held at Santa Maria Church, the 8th grade graduation ceremony included a religious Mass as well as remarks from school pastor Rev. Fernando Real, principal Sr. Diane Mastroianni, and faculty member Sara Shannon. The valedictorian and salutatorian also addressed their class. In addition to the bestowing of diplomas, students received honors and awards for their academic and extracurricular achievements. We are grateful to the many family members, friends, and supporters who were able to participate in this special day, including Board member Erik Ducey.



Board Member Erik Ducey with Sarah, the 8th grade salutatorian

Addressing her class, salutatorian Sarah offered heartfelt words: "Since arriving at Santa Maria, I have realized that we are one family. The teachers are devoted to us, and have taught us not only school lessons but morals. We all come from different traditions and cultures, but we share a common aim: to grow in faith and knowledge, and to contribute to our families and communities."

All 32 students have been accepted to and will attend high school, including top Catholic high schools: Cardinal Hayes, Cardinal Spellman, Cathedral, Monsignor Scanlon, Preston, Salesian, St. Catherine's Academy, St. Raymond's Academy, and St. Raymond High School for Boys.

Congratulations to the Class of 2010!

Donor-Sponsored Field Trips Enrich Student Learning

Imagine becoming a botanist, tenement inspector, or wilderness explorer for a day. Santa Maria School students have experienced just this on exciting academic field trips. Thank you to the Santa Maria Advisory Board members, alumni, and other friends for underwriting the costs of these trips.

Over the 2010-2011 school year, there were five Board or donor-sponsored trips. Board member Debra Saito and her husband Eisuke sponsored the Kindergarten's trip to learn about plants and animals at the New York Botanical Garden and Alley Pond Environmental Center. Board member Brooks Tanner chaperoned the 2nd grade, which also visited the New York Botanical Garden. An anonymous donor funded the 3rd grade's nature hike at the Greenburgh Nature Center, and alumni Carmen Nanko-Fernandez made possible the 7th grade's visit to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.



Brooks Tanner chaperoning students at the Botanical Garden

"Planting the seeds was my favorite part of the Botanical Garden trip," said 2nd grader Jason of his trip to the New York Botanical Garden. It was fun putting the seeds in dirt and then bringing them back to school to watch them grow."

Crystal in the 7th grade also enjoyed her trip to the Tenement Museum. Crystal said, "This trip was so much fun because we got to go into a former tenement house and speak with an actor playing an early 20th century immigrant to America. This made the experience feel real and taught me about the issues that immigrants faced."

Brooks Tanner, an Advisory Board member who underwrote the 2nd grade trip, explains his support for academic field trips: "I was interested in sponsoring the trip because I remember how much fun school field trips were. I also think it is very worthwhile for kids to get a chance to do some exploring of the world outside their homes and school. For students living in low-income, urban areas, this is of course especially true."

If you would like to support an academic field trip, please contact the Santa Maria School development office at santa.maria.development@gmail.com or 718-823-3636 ext. 5.

Patron-Sponsored Music Program Produces School Concert



3rd graders playing the recorder

Strike up the band! On the evening of June 17th Santa Maria School students performed their first in-school concert. Both the band and recorder ensemble played to a packed house of family, friends, and fellow students. Through the Paul Effman Music Service, 2nd through 5th graders learn recorder and students in 3rd through 8th have the option to join the school band. Many thanks to school Patrons Richard and Deborah Brennan for supporting this wonderful enrichment program.

"Performing in the concert was awesome!" gushed 5th grade saxophonist Ariana. "I had never played an instrument onstage before. At first I was nervous but when I started playing that feeling went away. I am so proud that my parents and friends could see me."

With this event's success, the school community is already looking forward to next year's concert. Sr. Diane said, "It was heartwarming to see students beaming with pride as they showed off all they had learned over the course of the year. They worked so hard, and this obviously paid off. I anticipate the school concert becoming an annual tradition at SMS."

Santa Maria Students Attend NY Philharmonic Concert

The murmur of students' voices quickly quieted as Alan Gilbert, Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, took center stage. With a swish of his arms the orchestra struck up, beginning Lincoln Center's annual concert for elementary schools. The generosity of Judy and Russell Carson enabled Santa Maria's 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades to attend this fantastic musical event at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.



Santa Maria students seated around the fountain at Lincoln Center

Accompanied by the orchestra, costumed actors presented engaging scenes from Igor Stravinsky's ballet *Petrushka*. The performance was interactive, with the actors periodically stopping to discuss a scene and field student questions. Also performed were several short compositions that elementary students in attendance had written.

"I loved the music at the New York Philharmonic," said Russell in 5th grade. "It was powerful with many feelings and emotions. My favorite part was listening to the young composers. The songs were well written and dramatic. I had always thought only adults could be composers, but now I know I could do it too if I work hard."

In the weeks leading up to the concert, students met several times with a New York Philharmonic program Teaching Assistant, Paul Murphy. Mr. Murphy introduced the students to the instruments, themes, and musical style of *Petrushka*. Students even had the chance to compose their own songs using their recorders. After the concert, he conducted a follow up visit to reinforce the program's lesson.

Third grade teacher Carmen Rosado is hopeful that this opportunity will be available to students in the coming years. "The students and I thoroughly enjoyed the New York Philharmonic program," Mrs. Rosado said. "The in-school TA visits were very important because they prepared the students to understand the concert."

Our Newest Board Member: Erik Ducey



Erik Ducey with Principal Sr. Diane Mastroianni

The entire Santa Maria School community eagerly welcomes Erik Ducey to the Advisory Board. Erik grew up in Pittsford, New York, a small town outside of Rochester. He is an Assistant Vice President at CitiBank and currently lives in Manhattan's Gramercy Park neighborhood. Erik first learned about Santa Maria through BoardAssist, a New York-based organization that matches individuals with nonprofit board opportunities. After touring the school, he decided to join the Advisory Board.

"I knew immediately that I had found the right school. I was most impressed by the fact that Santa Maria is committed to improving and building upon past successes, whether relating to the school's academic and enrichment opportunities, or physical infrastructure. Plus, I had the chance to meet some students who were all so eager to share what they were learning."

Erik recently enjoyed attending the 8th grade graduation ceremony, where "the happiness and pride in the students' achievements was contagious," and he looks forward to attending as many school events as possible. Erik also plans to visit classes to get to know the students on a personal level. "For me, the best part of joining the Board is the community that comes with it. I am excited to be a member of the Santa Maria family."