

**Summer  
2009**

**Volume 3, Issue 2**

# *Santa Maria School Impressions*

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

## **Principal's Corner**

Dear Friends:

As the class of 2009 sets off to high school, I reflect on their outstanding academic achievements and contributions to the Santa Maria family. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders are the role models to the rest of the school, and while we are excited that they are taking this well-earned step forward, we will also miss them dearly. Please join me in wishing the very best for the class of 2009.

This year, Santa Maria benefited from the support of many generous friends. Inside, you will read about a variety of foundation and donor support that has made possible enrichment programs and capital improvements, increased library resources, helped fund academic field trips, and much more.

Though still summer, we are already looking ahead to the coming academic year. We look forward to a successful 2009-2010! Thank you again and may God bless you.

Sincerely,  
Sr. Diane Mastroianni, ASCJ

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## **SMS Bids a Fond Farewell to its 2009 Graduates**

Beaming with pride and periodically erupting in energetic applause, parents, faculty, and friends looked on as the members of the class of 2009 received their diplomas and became Santa Maria's newest alumni. All 38 members of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class plan to attend high school where they will undoubtedly continue to shine in their academic and extracurricular activities. The presence of the school's Patrons Richard and Deborah Brennan, who presented awards to the valedictorian and salutatorian, made this special day all the more meaningful.



*Patrons Richard and Deborah Brennan  
with 8th grade valedictorian Alisa.*

Students from the class of 2009 will go to top high schools: Cardinal Spellman, Cathedral, LaGuardia Performing Arts, Monsignor Scanlon, Mount St. Michael Academy, Preston, St. Catharine's Academy, St. Raymond's Academy for Girls, and St. Raymond's High School for Boys. Here, the efforts needed to fine-tune our students' readiness for success in college and beyond will continue.

Santa Maria also hosted a mini-graduation this spring. Several days before the 8<sup>th</sup> grade ceremony, the Pre-K and Kindergarten classes had their own celebrations. Joined by families, friends, and siblings, our youngest classes performed songs and dances, and gave words of thanks to the audience before receiving their own diplomas.

**Congratulations and best of luck to all of our graduates!**

## **Help Make Our Dreams Come True**

Music program for upper grades: **\$20,000**

New computers for our computer lab: **\$15,000**

Academic Field Trips: **\$1,000**

*You will find a detachable contribution form on the last page of the newsletter.  
For more information please contact Max Nardini, Director of Development,  
at (718) 823-3636 or [tmnardini@gmail.com](mailto:tmnardini@gmail.com).*

## Library Connections Sponsors 10 Academic Field Trips



*The 1st grade at the New York Botanical Garden*

"Wow, flowers!" squeaked 2<sup>nd</sup> grader Priya as her class entered the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. This field trip, along with nine others, was supported by a \$3,900 grant from *Library Connections*.

Nearly every grade from Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> went on at least one field trip through this grant. Grades 5 through 8 viewed the medieval art and architecture collection at the Cloisters Museum. The 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades learned about life during the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade studied machine science at the Long Island Children's Museum, and the Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup>

grades became amateur botanists at the New York Botanical Garden.

At the latter, students reviewed the plant life cycle, went on a flower scavenger hunt, and even planted seeds in small cups to take with them for further study. "The best part was learning about the seeds!" exclaimed 1<sup>st</sup> grader Rafael.

Ahken, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, was equally excited about his trip to the Cloisters. "It was awesome. I learned a lot about Medieval Art that I didn't know before."

*Library Connections* seeks to integrate library and classroom studies. The trips, a collaboration between the school librarian and classroom teachers, were big successes. "The students were so excited and happy to visit the Botanical Garden," commented 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher Mrs. Ortiz. "They learned a lot about the plant cycle, which we have been studying in class for our science unit on 'living things.' What great way to bring our studies to life!"



*1st graders Jaden, Michael, Isaiah, and Louis planting seeds at the Botanical Garden*

## New Website Boosts Student Recruitment for 2009-2010 School Year

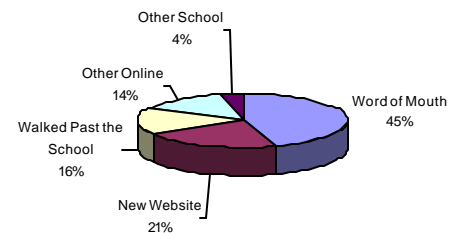
With its sleek design, intuitive layout, and professional photos, Santa Maria's new website has proven effective at attracting prospective families. This spring, over one-fifth learned about Santa Maria through the site – a complete turnaround from last year when the old website failed to attract any inquiries.

This year, we have been carefully tracking how prospective parents hear about Santa Maria. The website was second only to "Word of Mouth" (or, family, friend, and coworker recommendations) at 45%. Then comes "Walking Past the school" at 16%, Other Online Sources" (i.e. [privateschoolreview.com](http://privateschoolreview.com)) at 14%, and "Other School Recommendations" at 4%.

Through the website's online forms, prospective parents, alumni, and friends may contact the school and request applications, newsletters, or other information. Soon, the site will also support credit card donations. Thank you to the corporate and private donors who supported this project!

**Check out our new website: [www.santamariabronx.org](http://www.santamariabronx.org)**

**How New Families Heard About SMS**



## 2nd Annual Wine Tasting a Success!

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, nearly 70 friends and supporters gathered at Moore Brothers Wine Company in lower Manhattan for Santa Maria's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wine Tasting Benefit. Through ticket sales, silent auction bids, a 50/50 raffle, and other donations, **the event raised over \$9,000**. Proceeds will support urgently needed repairs to the school's aging heating system. The event's success was possible because the school's dedicated Advisory Board members enthusiastically and meticulously worked all the details of this lively evening.

Guests mingled with Santa Maria student representatives and faculty members while enjoying hors d'oeuvres and a wine tasting presentation by Moore Brothers wine sommelier and co-owner David Moore.

One highlight was the remarks offered by 8<sup>th</sup> grade student Kaitlin. "I have been at Santa Maria for over 10 years and it has been like a second home to me," she said. "There are so many great things that I can say about the school. It has been a wonderful place that has given me a great education, and lots of friends and memories." Advisory Board Member Courtney Carson and Principal Sr. Diane also spoke about their inspiring Santa Maria experiences.

Thank you to the Advisory Board, the Moore Brothers Wine Company, the individuals and companies that donated silent auction items and other gifts, and everyone who attended! The continued commitment of Santa Maria's friends has made the Wine Tasting an annual springtime tradition.



*8th graders Iovana and Anabelis (left) with Patron Richard Brennan and Principal Sr. Diane*



*Board Member Courtney Carson with 8th graders Alisa, Iovana, and Anabelis (left to right)*



*Left to Right: John Littzi, Board Member Kallie Steffes, and Jared DeMarino*

## 2nd Annual Wine Tasting Donors and Supporters

Anthony Baldino  
 Maxwell and Sally Belding  
 Abby Blum  
 Beau Bohm  
 Cantey Boyd  
 Richard and Deborah Brennan  
 Ryan Brennan  
 Daniel Brupbacher  
 Ted Burdick  
 Greg Cahill  
 Lauren Cahill  
 Courtney Carson  
 Jennifer Ciullo  
 Matt Clare  
 Joshua Chan  
 Anthony Daniel  
 Carolyn Davis  
 Jackie Day  
 Jason Del Ray  
 Jared DeMarino  
 William Drew  
 Paul J. DuWors  
 Ned Dybvig  
 Kevin England

John and Ellen Frawley  
 Mike Glantz  
 Amanda Goodwin  
 Walter and Clare Hoehn  
 Audrey Huzenit  
 Laura Kaye  
 Avery LaChance  
 Alexandra Laurits  
 John Littzi  
 Wanda Luciano  
 Anthony Marini  
 Maureen Marquess  
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 William and Tricia McCulloch  
 Peter McCulloch  
 Jeanne McGannon  
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 Konstantin Medvedovsky  
 Melanie Moss  
 Mary Murphy  
 Thomas and Ruth Nardini  
 Francis and Aida Neubauer  
 Daphne Palmer

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 AnnMarie Russolillo  
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 Sara Shannon  
 Brian Shearer  
 Johanna Simpson  
 Todd Soiefer  
 Lauren Stahl  
 Kallie Steffes  
 Tom Sullivan  
 Saveria Verlezza  
 Jayson Villalobos  
 Jennifer Walford  
 Amanda Westbrook  
 Nick Yglesias  
Corporate Support:  
 Chelsea Piers  
 Equinox Fitness Club  
 Magnolia Bakery  
 Moore Brothers Wine Co.  
 New York Yoga  
 SeamlessWeb  
 Vineyard Vines



*From left to right:  
 Advisory Board Member  
 Brian McGowan,  
 Ned Dybvig, Ryan  
 Brennan, and Tom  
 Sullivan enjoying the  
 Benefit*

## Santa Maria Welcomes Three New Board Members

Santa Maria School is thrilled to welcome Debra Saito, Brian Shearer, and Brooks Tanner to the school's Advisory Board. The Board meets approximately four times a year to assess the school's financial status, enrollment trends, test scores, and programmatic and capital needs. Board members visit classes, chaperone field trips, attend the Christmas Show and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation, and organize annual events including the fall Painting Day and spring Wine Tasting Benefit. If you are interested in joining, contact Max Nardini at [tmnadini@gmail.com](mailto:tmnadini@gmail.com).



*Advisory Board Member Brian Shearer with Principal Sr. Diane and guest Laura Kaye at the 2nd Annual Wine Tasting*

### Debra Saito

Born and raised in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Ms. Saito lives in New York City and is a Bank Examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

"[Being on the Advisory Board] combines the opportunity to interact with a great group of kids, the dedicated school staff, and likeminded professionals," she said. Ms. Saito is excited to visit the school frequently, attend the Christmas Show, and organize Japanese-themed cultural activities for the students. Her favorite part about joining the school family is "the kids, and their excitement, earnestness, energy, and love of the school. It will be a huge honor to be part of something so powerful and positive."

### Brian Shearer

Mr. Shearer is an analyst in the Mergers & Acquisitions group at Brown Brothers Harriman & Company. He grew up in Alexandria, Virginia and lives in New York City. Mr. Shearer decided to join the Board after viewing the website and attending a Board meeting and the Spring Wine Tasting. "I quickly saw the constructive impact that the Board was having on the school community," he remarked. I want to bring positive changes to fruition in a timely manner and that is what the Board is working to do. After the success of our Spring Wine Tasting Fundraiser, I am excited to complete our heating system renovation project and learn more about the school and its needs. I am looking forward to working hard, visiting the students regularly, and having a fulfilling and enjoyable 2009-2010 school year!"

### Brooks Tanner

An investment banker by trade, Mr. Tanner grew up in New Canaan, Connecticut and currently lives in New York City. As a member of the Board, he looks forward to visiting classes, chaperoning field trips, and assisting with the physical education program. "What clinched [joining the Board] for me was visiting the school and meeting the kids, Sr. Diane, and the teaching staff," Mr. Tanner said. "After seeing all of those smiling, enthusiastic faces, how can you not want to help?"

## Grant Update: Thank You to Our Additional Foundation Supporters!

### **\$35,000** from The Endowment for Inner-City Education . . .

This generous grant will make possible crucial repairs to the school's heating system. Several major pieces of heating equipment are corroded through and could fail at any moment. These improvements will make a huge difference in the comfort level of our students and faculty. Grant funds will be combined with the Wine Tasting proceeds and gifts from other committed donors to make up the total project cost.

### **\$5,500** from the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries . . .

With these funds, we will expand our library's biography and fiction sections. The school will purchase books exploring racial, cultural, socio-economic, and geographical diversity. We will also subscribe to class sets of news media publications.



*This critical component to the heating system must be replaced*

# 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.*

## Help the Children of Santa Maria Fulfill Their Dreams

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 grade

**\$300:** Art supplies for after school program

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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: Max Nardini  
1510 Zerega Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10462