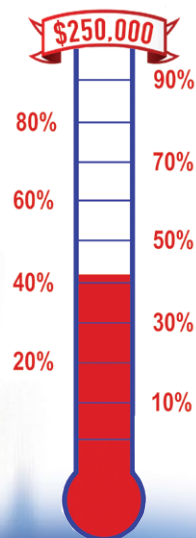


THE GAEIL

The Newsletter for Alumni and Parents of St. Mary's/Kennedy Catholic High School

Volume 18 – Fall 2014



Tracking our Progress

Kennedy Catholic's full fundraising focus has been on reaching our goal of \$250,000 so we can break ground on a new track, which is scheduled for completion in September of 2015. We are certainly getting there and are nearing the halfway mark, but we need your support to make the track a reality by contributing to our Annual Fund.

See our cover story on Page 3



**KENNEDY
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**

*Founded as St. Mary's
High School 1924-1966*

President's Page

Fall 2014



Dear Alumni, Parents and Friends,

As you sit down with your families for a splendid Thanksgiving meal, I hope that you can take a few moments to digest some current Kennedy Catholic news in our latest edition of *The Gael*.

We had a wonderful turnout at our recent Open House with 280 prospective students in attendance and it is clear to me that the future of Kennedy looks very bright.

On another note, I urge you to take a look around our school and you will readily notice the many upgrades due to the hard work of our staff during summer renovations.

- **The Library of the Presidents has been completely re-done and features energy saving LED lighting, 40 computers, furnishings and a big-screen television for student and faculty presentations**
- **The Kennedy Catholic Technology Center in Memory of John R. Pennelle is now complete and a big thank you goes to Linda Troani for her munificence**
- **Energy efficient LED lighting and ceiling tiles in academic areas**
- **A/C upgrades as well as restroom renovations**

I have great confidence that the grandest upgrade of them all — a brand new state-of-the-art track — is well on its way.

With your support, we are getting closer to making a brand new track a reality. We have already raised a substantial amount and with your generosity, I believe we are right on track to reaching our goal.

There is a great history of success at Kennedy in track and field, and we look forward to blessing our program with a beautiful new competition surface. To date, we have raised over \$100,000 and are on the fast track to reaching the goal of \$250,000.

I would like to personally thank the following benefactors for their contributions to the track fund: James and Mrs. Joanne '83 Kastberg P '09, '12, '15, '18, '18, '18; Mark '71 and Denise Girolamo; Matthew '88 and Maureen Searles P '17; Denis O'Meara '68; Joseph Costello '58; John Viniello P '98; Kenneth and Audra Brown P '16; Anthony Pauline '81; Carol Morris P '01, '02, '09 and the generous individuals at IBM.

Everyone here at Kennedy is deeply grateful for your bigheartedness and we are counting on each and every one of you to help get our track up and running in the near future.

To contribute to Kennedy Catholic, please use the enclosed envelope or visit KennedyCatholic.org/support-us.

I look forward to seeing some of you very soon at our Turkey Bowl and Turkey Trot on Friday, November 28.

In closing, I hope that all of you enjoy Thanksgiving Day and take some time in prayer to be thankful for everything that God has given us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Mark G. Vaillancourt
President and Principal

Right Around the Corner

Kennedy closer to breaking ground on new track, closes in on halfway point

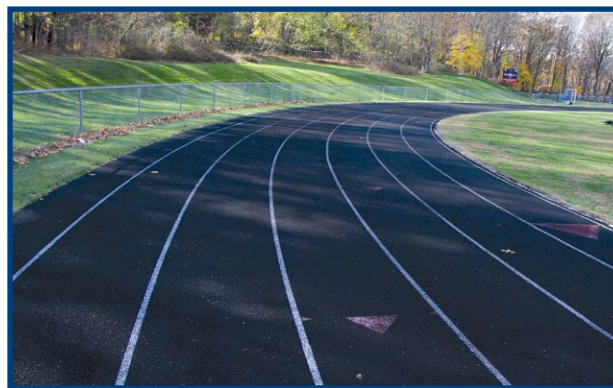
What was once considered a three-phase project that would take several years, a new track at Kennedy Catholic is becoming more and more of a reality with each passing day.

To date, we have raised over \$100,000 and are well on our way to meeting our goal of \$250,000 to break ground this spring. The total cost of the track is \$750,000.

The first task is to strip the current track surface and then shorten the concrete foundation to make the track a proper 400-meter course. The current straightaway will be widened and new surfacing material will be installed for the triple jump, pole vault, shot put and other field events.

With a great history of success at Kennedy Catholic in track and field, we hope to continue it on a brand new beautiful competition surface. With your help and generosity, we can make a new track possible very soon.

If you would like to discuss a pledged gift to the track campaign, please contact Director of Advancement Mark Brennan at (914) 232-5061 Ext. 110 or send an E-mail to Advancement@KennedyCatholic.org. You can also visit KennedyCatholic.org/support-us and make an online donation today.



Summer Projects Complete

Our staff was hard at work over the summer to complete a number of upgrades to the school that we would like to share with you.

The Library of the Presidents is new and improved. It now features a grand total of 40 new computers for students to do their work, LED lighting, paintings, statues, new carpeting and furniture along with a big-screen television for students and faculty to conduct presentations. Thank you to the Blue and White Fund under the guidance of John and Bonnie Gould for their generosity.

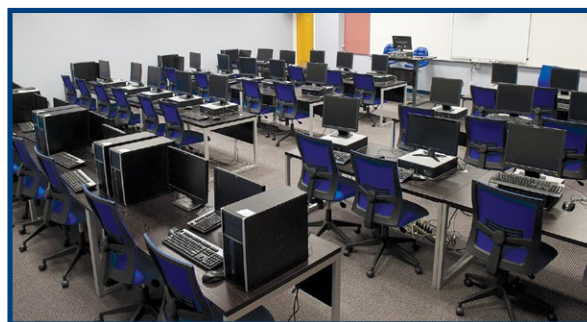
The Kennedy Catholic Technology Center in Memory of John R. Pennelle is another sight to behold. Kennedy's breathtaking brand new tech center features a number of computers for students where they can engage in blended and virtual learning programs. Along with the library, the students have upwards of 80 computers in the building at their disposal.

Other improvements at Kennedy include lighting and ceiling tiles in academic areas, A/C upgrades as well as remodeled restroom facilities.

We hope you can take a moment to look around our building to take in all of the recent additions.



The Library of the Presidents is now complete and features LED lighting, 40 computers, a big screen-television for presentations and more.



The Kennedy Catholic Technology Center allows students to engage in blended and virtual learning programs.

Photos by Jacob Bergmeier

Photos by Jacob Bergmeier and Robert DiAntonio

Kennedy Golf Classic a Hole-in-One Tournament draws 158 golfers at Centennial, honors Lawrence Gulley

Kennedy Catholic's 11th annual Golf Classic was a rousing success.

The day featured beautiful weather and a total of 158 golfers participated on Thursday, Oct. 2 at Centennial Golf Club in Carmel. It was the fourth straight year that more than 150 golfers competed.

"We had a tremendous day," said Father Mark Vaillancourt, president and principal of Kennedy Catholic. "I always see the golf outing as a great community builder. It brings back parents, alumni and then it blends them with current students and teachers. We've been very successful at Centennial because we've opened the venue up now to use all 27 holes. We have found that it's a day that people look for to set on their calendar to come back. So they come back with anticipation of having a good day. God blessed us with great weather and we had great participation from local communities with the gifts that they've given us."

The golf outing was played in honor of Lawrence Gulley, a 1984 Kennedy Catholic graduate, who passed away in April. Gulley, known to many as 'Larry Legend,' had a four-some spot left open for him in a group comprised of his close friends and Kennedy alum Thomas Baker, Art Weisgerber and Bryan Parkhurst.

"He was a person that pulled everyone together and enjoyed every moment of this," Baker said of Gulley. "He made this more fun than any of you guys could believe. All we did was bust each others' chops for five consecutive hours every year and he looked forward to that more than anything else."

With an impressive score of 54, the overall tournament winners were a group comprised of Kennedy Catholic seniors Christian Spano, Michael Donnelly and Armando Barquin along with Ray Spano, Christian's father.

The second place team totaled a 58 and featured John Viniello, Stacy McGratty, Lisa Delzio and Mark Delzio.

"Something like the golf outing is a big day for us not just for the community, but also for the funds that it raises," Father Vaillancourt said. "We're excited that this year, we're really pushing all of our fundraising efforts behind the track program. When we have a good day like yesterday, I know that the track is a certain reality."

For the first time in the tournament's history, a female foursome of Kennedy faculty was put together and was comprised of Arlene O'Rourke, Noreen Violante, Ellen Kelly and Ines Wilhelm-Boston.

"As Father Vaillancourt said in his blessing, it truly was a day to share with others who hold Kennedy so dear," Violante said. "A gorgeous fall day, lovely dinner, and a chance to bond with faculty, staff and students — what more could one want? There was tons of laughter, encouragement, support and fun. I especially loved seeing our students outside of the classroom and sharing the day with them."



Kennedy alum Thomas Baker says a few kind words regarding his friend Lawrence Gulley, a 1984 Kennedy graduate who passed away in April. Baker's foursome left a spot open in memory of Gulley.



From left: Ray Spano, Christian Spano, Mike Donnelly and Armando Barquin placed first with a score of 54.



From left: Arlene O'Rourke, Noreen Violante, Ellen Kelly and Ines Wilhelm-Boston comprised the first female faculty four some in tournament history.



Father Mark Vaillancourt speaks with the Clair family during the putting competition.

The 2014 Kennedy Golf Classic WINNERS

1st place – 54

Christian Spano '14
Mike Donnelly '14

Armando Barquin '14
Ray Spano

2nd place – 58

John Viniello
Stacy McGratty '98

Lisa Delzio
Mark Delzio

Closest to Pin Winners

5 Meadows: Mark Delzio – 3'2"

5 Lakes: John Baranello – 5'5"

5 Fairways: Stacy McGratty – 12'3"

Hitting the Books

Two Gaels reach semifinalist status in National Merit Scholarship program, seven commended

Two Kennedy Catholic students — seniors Tucker Clair and Susanna Cohen — were named semifinalists in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Approximately 16,000 semifinalists were named in the 60th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level of the competition. About 90 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain finalist standing, and more than half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title.

About 1.4 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest scoring entrants in each state. The number of semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

Five other Kennedy Catholic students were named Commended Students in the National Merit Program: seniors Mary Burns, Margaret Caridi, Jennifer Galvao, Alexandria Kleinschmidt and Ryan Marrone.

Congratulations Tucker, Susanna, Mary, Margaret, Jennifer, Alexandria and Ryan!



Kennedy Catholic seniors Tucker Clair and Susanna Cohen were named semifinalists in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. The duo is joined by Father Mark Vaillancourt and Samantha Black.

Longest Drive Winner – Men

Dan Beyrer

Longest Drive Winner – Women

Stacy McGratty

Putting Contest Winner

Christian Spano

Making it Fantastic “Most Honest Golfer”

David Doner – 80

The 2014 Golf Classic was brought to you by...

Cart Sponsors

Cuddy & Feder LLP
(Dan Leary '77, Anthony Morando '01)
Greenway General Contracting
(Brian Duffy '92)

Longest Drive Sponsors

Merritt Healthcare
(Matthew Searles '88, P'17)
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(Stephen Togher P'18)

***Thank you to all of our
hole sponsors!***

Closest to the Pin Sponsors

Competitive Telecoms Group
(Jerry DeMartino)
The Flietz Family
(Megan '15 and Daniel '17)

Putting Contest Sponsors

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- Megan '15 and Daniel '17; Panny
and Son Plumbing & Heating Inc.
- Michael & Shelley Panny P '17;
The O'Hagan Family

2013-2014 Annual Giving (continued on pages 7-8)

Due to the kindness and generosity of each one of you, Kennedy Catholic is able to flourish each and every year. From parents to alumni to friends, every dollar you're able to donate is very much appreciated. We would like to humbly thank everyone for their support and we hope you will join them in the future to help us continue to make Kennedy a tremendous educational experience.

Devine Compassion Elite \$10,000 and up

Mr. Robert Dunn
Ms. Linda Troani

St. Mary's Associates \$5,000-9,999

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Courage and Compassion Club \$2,500-4,999

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President's Dinner Honors The Rev. Joseph D. Fessio, S.J.

Trump National Golf Club in Briarcliff Manor was the site of Kennedy Catholic's annual President's Dinner this past May. Reverend Joseph D. Fessio, S.J. was the man of the hour, as he was the honoree for the evening. Father Fessio has been previously described by *Time Magazine* as the American "closest to the Pope" and the Gaels were honored to have such magnificence in their presence.



The Lux Christi Award recipient, The Rev. Joseph D. Fessio.

Father Fessio is the founder and editor of Ignatius Press and is the former chancellor of Ave Maria University. He's also the founder and president of Campion College of San Francisco and the founder and director of the St. Ignatius Institute at the University of San Francisco.

Kennedy's 2014 Students of Excellence were Jason Agresti, Kevin Brennan, Amanda Corcione, Andrew DeMarco, Allison Devaney, Bridget Devey, MareKate DiChiara, Andrew Farrell, Thomas Girolamo, Leah Greene, Juliana Gullotta, Yaroslav Jakymec, Brian Kelly, Blair Lenzi, Brendan Liberati, Cecilia Liu, Lara Manbeck, Julia Mee, Joseph Neithardt, Stephanie Sayegh, Amy Sniffen, Robert Sorentino and Ellen Spillane.



Twenty-three Kennedy Catholic seniors in the Class of 2014 were honored as the 2014 Students of Excellence.

For English and Theology professor Robert Furey, it's a privilege and a blessing to work at a Catholic school. Furey, who was born and raised in Southern California, was named the 2014 Teacher of the Year.

The Divine Compassion Award was received by our former chaplain Reverend Robert M. Dunn, a native New Yorker ordained for the Archdiocese of New York. Father Dunn was born and raised in Manhattan and was ordained by Cardinal O'Connor in 1992, receiving his MA from St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie.



Robert Furey was selected as Kennedy Catholic's Teacher of the Year.

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Father Mark Vaillancourt presents The Rev. Robert M. Dunn with the Divine Compassion Award.

Photos by Jacob Bergmeier

The Fantastic Four

Four Kennedy Catholic baseball players commit to college

Photos by Robert DiAntonio

Since Bob Fletcher took over the Kennedy Catholic varsity baseball team nine years ago, the Gaels have been on the rise.

Kennedy earned a NYSPHSAA state title in 2008 and has won two Section 1 titles under Fletcher, along with sending dozens of players to the college diamonds.

Now four more Gaels will join that group.

Seniors Griffin Dey, Ryan Marrone, Gavin Garay and Tom Brady all recently committed to play college baseball.

Dey, a first baseman and pitcher, will attend Yale University. Garay, a third baseman, is headed to St. John's University. Marrone, a right-handed pitcher, will take his talents to Swarthmore College. Brady, a second baseman, will compete at New Jersey Institute of Technology.



Kennedy Catholic seniors Tom Brady (NJIT), Ryan Marrone (Swarthmore), Gavin Garay (St. John's) and Griffin Dey (Yale) will all play baseball at the next level.

"It's pretty exciting," said Garay, who chose St. John's because of their strong academics, coaching staff and reputation. "I've played with these guys for a couple years now — just developing together and stuff like that."

Dey chose Yale because it was the perfect combination of academics and athletics.

"I fit with the coaching staff real well," Dey said. "It's close to home and I feel like I can go there and do well in and out of the classroom. My whole goal was to continue my baseball career as far as I can and playing at Yale is going to help me pursue my goals. I'm really excited to get the opportunity."

On top of that, there have also been improvements made to the beautiful baseball facility at Kennedy Catholic. The Gaels replaced the fence behind home plate with a four-foot brick wall along with netting to make the field more aesthetically pleasing to spectators.

"It gives it a more open look and a better view of the field," Fletcher said.

Stands are also being added behind home plate and will encompass the whole backstop. There will be eight rows and it will hold approximately 150 people.

In addition, the fencing was taken down in front of the dugouts and railings with cushions were added, similar to a Major League ballpark. The Gaels' clubhouse has also been expanded and upgraded. Each player has his own locker and there is now a patio in the back of the clubhouse.

Another feature the team wishes to add in the near future is the Nick Modico bullpen. Modico, a star pitcher on the Gaels' state championship squad in 2008, passed away last March after a battle with Ewing's Sarcoma. The bullpen will have a lower fence for easier communication with the dugout.

Each year the team has worked on adding something new to the field. A few years ago the dugouts were built and last year the team dug trenches and put the electricity in.

Now, the 2014-2015 Gaels are doing their part.

"It's really the kids who did most of the work along with Carl Peterson, who did most of it, along with the coaches helping out," said Fletcher, who also credited Danny Garay and Tom Brady for their help with improvements to the baseball complex. "We've been doing this since August and these kids have been breaking their rear ends. It's not done, but we're almost there."



The fence that was in front of the dugout has been removed and railings with cushions have been added, to give the dugouts a more Major League feel.



The Gaels' clubhouse has been expanded along with a patio being added.

Gaels a Force in the Fall in Athletics

Varsity volleyball team claims CHSAA City Championship

Kennedy Catholic's varsity and JV sports teams had a myriad of successes during the fall season.

In varsity volleyball, the Gaels captured the CHSAA New York City Championship by defeating St. Joseph Hill Academy 3-0 in the finals at Cardinal Spellman High School on Saturday, November 8. The team also reached the Class A Archdiocesan Finals and finished the season with an outstanding record of 20-4.

Kennedy's junior varsity volleyball team garnered the league championship by defeating Good Counsel.

The varsity girls soccer team won its second consecutive Bronx/Westchester league championship and finished the season with a record of 14-2-1. Senior Stephanie Amengual, sophomore Kerry Brosnan and sophomore Deirdre Kokaso were named All-League in the Bronx/Westchester Division.

In varsity boys soccer, the squad finished with a record of 6-5-3 and senior Michael Donnelly, senior Chris Mulholland and junior Matt Kiernan were selected as All-League.

A youthful varsity tennis team with zero seniors had a strong season under first-year coach Joe Milian. The team finished 5-2-2 and advanced deep into the CHSAA playoffs.

Photos by Robert DiAntonio



Tara Heslin-Scott and the Kennedy Catholic varsity girls soccer team finished the season with a 14-2-1 record and won their second consecutive Bronx/Westchester league championship.

Kennedy's varsity volleyball team won the CHSAA City Championship and finished the season 20-4. The JV team won the league championship.



Walking with a Purpose

Gaels' football team volunteers at Lustgarten Foundation's Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk

A beautiful fall sunrise over the Hudson River was the backdrop as our Kennedy Catholic football coaches and players volunteered for the Lustgarten Foundation's Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk on Saturday, October 18 at the 'Walkway Over the Hudson' in Poughkeepsie.

As the sun was rising, our players helped the event staff set up tents and booths and carried supplies. Proudly wearing their Kennedy Catholic football jerseys, the players greeted the walk participants, assisted with parking, and distributed information on the mission of the Lustgarten Foundation, which is to raise funds for pancreatic cancer research.

The event staff and participants commented on how helpful and responsible the Kennedy Catholic students were from set up to clean up.

We are very proud of our Kennedy Catholic football players and coaches for their service to the Lustgarten foundation.



Kennedy Head Coach Ted Florio, with his team at the Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk.



The Kennedy Catholic varsity football team was excited to volunteer for the Lustgarten Foundation's Pancreatic Research Walk in Poughkeepsie.



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Publisher: Rev. Mark G. Vaillancourt, Ph.D.

Editor-in-Chief: Robert J. DiAntonio

Contributing Writers: Robert J. DiAntonio,
Father Mark G. Vaillancourt

Photographers: Jacob Bergmeier, Robert J. DiAntonio

Design: Delfino Marketing Communications, Inc.

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Printing: Graphic Management Partners, Inc.

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