
THE GAEIL

The Newsletter for Alumni and Parents of St. Mary's/Kennedy Catholic High School
Volume 23 – Spring 2017

IN THIS EDITION

KENNEDY'S ART PROGRAM

MEENU WINS TOP PRIZE

SCIENCE SUPERSTARS

NOTABLE STUDENTS



KENNEDY CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL

Somers, New York





Pictured Above: The crew, costumers, and musicians of this year's Spring Musical, *The Boy Friend*.

The Gael is produced by the Office of Advancement at John F. Kennedy Catholic High School. If you have any questions, comments or news you would like to share with us, please call (914) 232-5061 ext. 110 or write to Advancement@KennedyCatholic.org.

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President's Message

Dear Friend of Kennedy Catholic High School,

I have a tremendous amount of pride in, and optimism for, our school. Pride, because we have accomplished so much in such a short time, and optimism, because there is still a lot more to do.

What have we done? After a few short years since the school's incorporation, just look at how our facilities have grown and improved and you have your answer. From LED lighting in the house to our plans for new LED lighting on our athletic fields – Kennedy is truly the bright and shining school on the hill. Yes, it has never been more exciting to be a Gael! Indeed, our students come to us from all over – 42 districts and 71 zip codes make up the Kennedy Catholic student body - we truly are a “Catholic Education that's Worth the Trip!”

Members of our current senior class have already been accepted into a wide variety of highly-regarded colleges and universities: Notre Dame, US Naval Academy, Fordham, Holy Cross, Villanova -- just to name a few.

And as always, our faith is strong. We have just recently celebrated the first anniversary of the passing of our beloved Sr. Barbara Heil, and we are blessed to have His Eminence Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan dedicate our grotto in her memory. She was an enduring symbol of our faith and we will continue to grow strong in that same faith that she shared with us as we honor her memory.

Thank you for your commitment to our school. As I said, there has never been a better time to be a Gael, and we look forward to spending that time with you. Visit our website and see the many opportunities that you can enjoy with us, or just contact our Director of Advancement, Fred Compton, for more details.

Go Kennedy and go Gaels!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Vaillancourt'.

Fr. Mark Vaillancourt
President and Principal

*“She was an enduring
symbol of our faith
and we will continue
to grow strong in that
same faith”*

Alumni Engagement

We invite you to stay in the loop with what is happening with us, share your alumni news, and continue building on the lasting memories that you created during your time at Saint Mary's & John F. Kennedy Catholic High School.

Join the Conversation



Facebook.com/KennedyCatholic
Facebook.com/KennedyGaels (Alumni)



Instagram.com/KennedyCatholic



Twitter.com/KennedyGaels



Youtube.com/KennedyCatholic1967

More social links can be found on our website:
KennedyCatholic.org/Contact-Us

Attend a Kennedy Event

Spring Concert - April 26, 2017

Blessing of Sister Barbara's Grotto - May 22, 2017

President's Dinner - May 24, 2017

Graduation - June 3, 2017

Golf Outing - October 5, 2017

Auction - November 18, 2017

To learn about these events and more, visit our website:
KennedyCatholic.org/Events

Give Back to Kennedy

Attend a Kennedy fundraising event.

Attend a school event like the musical.

Participate in the Annual Fund.

Make a one-time donation.

Support a scholarship of your choice.

Learn more on our website:
KennedyCatholic.org/Support-Us

Update your Information

Maybe you were recently married or had a child, maybe you got a big promotion, or maybe you just went for a hike in the Himalayas - we want to hear from you.

Update your alumni records so we know how best to connect with you and share Kennedy information.

Learn more on our alumni page:
KennedyCatholic.org/Alumni

Athletics

athletes making a mark



Jessica Link '18

Captain of the varsity softball team

In the first 4 games of the season:

- * Currently batting .526
- * 10 for 19 hits at bat
- * Scored 9 runs with 8 RBI's
- * 9 stolen bases
- * Currently being recruited by several Division 1 colleges



John Del Priore '18

Captain of the varsity golf team

Current stats:

- * Record: 6 and 2
- * Current Low Score: -1
- * Current Average Score: 36
- * Driver swing speed of 115 mph
- * Average drive of 300 yards, 10 yards above the tour average of professional golfers

Kennedy Arts Shine Bright

Performance and Creation Take Center Stage

Johann Sebastian Bach famously chalked his success up to sheer effort, opining that “anyone who works as hard as I did can achieve the same results.” But for Ines Boston, it’s less about perspiration and more about passion.

“Passion is the key. I am passionate about the kids. I am passionate about the arts in general,” Mrs. Boston explained. In her 7th year as Chair of Kennedy Catholic’s Arts Department, her passion has translated into an advocacy that permeates Kennedy’s curriculum and after-school activities, and has contributed to the music and performing arts program’s wild growth. The school, once known primarily for its rigorous college preparation and science/technology programs, has begun to attract new students by the sheer virtue of its arts and music curriculum.

Before her arrival at Kennedy, Mrs. Boston’s passion led the German-born music educator throughout Europe. A classically trained opera singer with a Master in Voice from Dresden University, she made her living training other professional singers. Upon arriving in the U.S., Mrs. Boston discovered her true calling: training – and inspiring – high school kids.

At Kennedy Catholic she found a school with a robust after-school theater program but otherwise in need of a shot in the arts arm of its curriculum. So, as J.S. Bach would have appreciated, she got to work.

The chorus numbered seven voices when Mrs. Boston arrived in Somers, and now boasts 54 singers. The concert band, under Mrs. Martha Belardo, has nearly doubled in size. The string ensemble – a rarity in any high school music program – didn’t even exist at Kennedy. Now, under 37-year music education veteran Mr. Frederick Ostrofsky, it’s become a sensation. No longer confined to their own individual arts silos, each of the programs are more integrated, with greater collaboration among all the singers, musicians and artists.

The performing arts are not for every child, but the arts program at Kennedy Catholic most assuredly is. Those not enrolled in chorus, string ensemble, concert band/jazz ensemble, or theater/acting in their freshman year find themselves in an Art/Music Appreciation course.

But make no mistake, the emphasis is on performance. As the ex-diva explained, “You can appreciate music in your home and living room, but going up there and performing for other people? That builds up personality. It takes courage to do that, trust in yourself, belief in yourself. It takes a lot of effort, discipline and willpower to be a performer.”

“It’s not simply about talent,” Mrs. Boston said, echoing Bach’s – her favorite composer’s – sentiment. “There are a lot of talented people out there. They will never





*"We want to go
where the music was
composed," she said
with a twinkle*

make it because they are not disciplined enough or they do not put enough work into their field."

For Mrs. Boston, that means a good decade of dedication. "It takes about ten years to develop a strong competency on a musical instrument, with daily practice of three hours," she explained.

For Kennedy students, 40 of those 180 minutes daily are covered by focused instruction in the classroom. But the remaining time is at home, and there is a lot of competition for it. "It is becoming harder for everyone to focus because the distractions – phones, iPads – have become bigger," Mrs. Boston said.

Of course, if you can't beat 'em, you join 'em, and the Arts Chair has a strategy for that as well. The music program at Kennedy Catholic is one of the very few among local schools to be using the SmartMusic app. The iPad-based software allows instructors to listen in on, and grade, their students' music homework.

Here's how it works: Students are assigned a section of music as homework, and the app allows them to record their work and submit it to their music teachers as if it were just another page of trigonometry problems. The program also provides its own evaluation, letting the students know if they failed to hit the correct notes. Teachers decide, lesson by lesson, how many tries their students are allowed for each assignment to get it right.

Join us next year March 1 - 4 for our next musical (name to be announced later)

To view pictures from this year's musical, *The Boy Friend*, visit our website

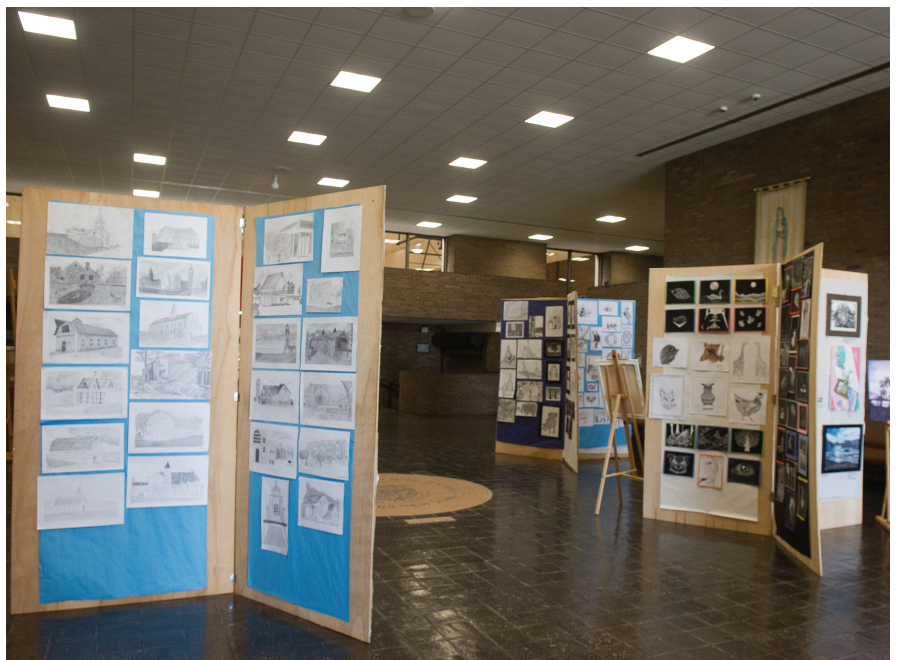
KennedyCatholic.org/Spring-Musical

The technology has been liberating for Kennedy music teachers because, as Mrs. Boston explained, there is never enough time within one class to teach all the music parts. Every group of instruments in the band, every range of voices in the chorus, has its own drill. By planting the SmartMusic app into their pedagogy, educators can spend more time teaching sight reading, introducing music theory and just building better musicians.

Earlier this year the work of Kennedy's Advanced Visual Arts students went on tour locally, exhibited at the Katonah Arts Museum and Garrison Art Center. Now Mrs. Boston has plans to enter the school's music arts groups into competitions, both domestically and internationally. After all, no rock star worthy of the name is happy until she has taken her show on the road, and Kennedy's own Meistersinger is no different.

"We want to go where the music was composed," she said with a twinkle, assuring for perhaps the first time in American high school history that a chorus would be thankful for its predominantly classical European repertoire.

But before any plane tickets are purchased, there is more work to be done, Ines Boston told us, to ensure the students have met the "right standards," the gold standards...her standards.





Kennedy Catholic's Science Superstars

By Meenu Johnkutty '17 & Lauren Telesca '17

While the rest of the academic area is silent at 2:45 pm on Tuesdays, there's one room where peals of laughter and conversation escape into the hallway: Room 118, also known as the Science Olympiad meeting room. The Science Olympiad team is a new addition to the Kennedy Catholic community. Boasting over 15 members, the Science Olympiad team is the first of its kind, bringing science, mathematics, and competition to an entire new level.

What is Science Olympiad? The easiest way to describe the purpose of the club would be to compare it to practicing for a colossal academic track meet. Comprised of more than 23 "events," the Science Olympiad program culminates in a regional competition where a team from every school brings their most talented students to compete. The team with the most wins in each event advances to the state level, and then the school who wins the state competition qualifies to compete at the national tournament. From building helicopters to exploring the complications of human physiology, the Science Olympiad team aimed to grasp science concepts that were well beyond the regents curriculum.

Before Science Olympiad competed at Princeton University and Byram Hills, it

first existed as only an idea in our minds. We knew that implementing a Science Olympiad at Kennedy would allow many science-directed students like us to enjoy working with science outside of the classroom. We also knew that the Kennedy science department would be receptive to a science-based club due to its dedication towards science and technology. However, we also had many challenges that we had to overcome in order to implement a fully functioning Science Olympiad team from scratch.

Our first challenge was finding a mentor that would be willing to stay after school and monitor our meetings. With her passion for teaching and science, Mrs. Ioannou willingly dedicated hours upon hours to the Science Olympiad club. From attending meetings to driving all the way to Princeton University at 6:00 am on a Saturday, Mrs. Ioannou is the reason the Science Olympiad club was able to strive. As a new addition to the Kennedy family, Mr. Reyes jumped in on the idea of belonging to a spirited community enthusiastic about the STEM field. Mr. Reyes is one of our biggest supporters, coming to every meeting and event, and sharing his keenness for science with us. Without Mrs. Ioannou and Mr. Reyes, there would be no Science Olympiad club.

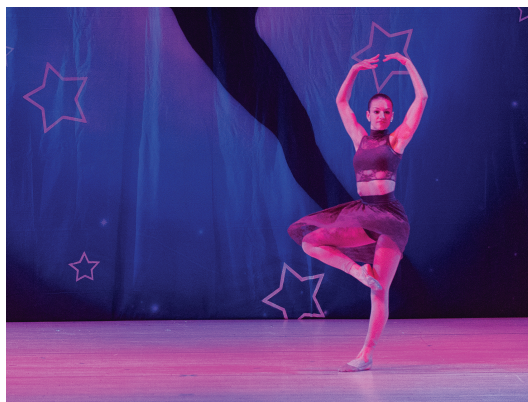
Our second challenge was finding funding for the team. Fr. Vaillancourt was willing to fund our initial expenditures. Then, the onus lay on us to host multiple bake sales throughout the year to raise money for kits and other building supplies. Our team was able to fund itself completely thanks to the participation of the school community.

After almost six months of practice, our team was eager to take off. We first took a road-trip down to Princeton. While most of the college students were sleeping in on a Saturday morning, high school students travelled from all over the east coast to participate in a competition with their peers. Aside from members of our team being able to build video games from scratch and estimate how many piano tuners there were in New York City, our team was able to learn from members of other schools. The alacrity of other teams to provide help to our novice group was astounding. A week later, our team went to Byram Hills. While only a regional tournament, the competition remained fierce. Surprisingly, we were able to rank in second place out of forty teams in an event. Though we did not advance to the state competition, we ranked decently as a school which only recently started a Science Olympiad team. We hope that our contribution serves as a backbone for future years, and will encourage other students to delve into the STEM field and fuel their passions for science.

Seniors Making a Splash

Goebelbecker is Going to USNA

Congratulations to Nicholas Goebelbecker who has been accepted to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Nick joins a long list of graduates who have attended and currently are attending the school.



Glendon Receives ROTC Scholarship

Congratulations to Erin Glendon who has received a full ROTC scholarship to the college of her choice. She now has the extremely hard task of choosing between the University of Notre Dame and Princeton University.



Hoinkins Has Many Talents

Although Juliet Hoinkins was accepted into UCLA and UC Berkeley, she will be attending Northeastern University as part of the Honors Program in the fall. Northeastern has a program that will allow her to explore as many topics as possible before deciding on a major. She also hopes to be on the dance team or in the dance company as she is a very accomplished dancer in ballet and tap.

Gould Earns Gold Standard

Senior Kyle Gould, Class of 2017, has been nominated as a Finalist in the National Merit Scholarship. Only 1 percent of students who take the PSAT exam earn this recognition, so we are extremely proud of Kyle's achievement. Kyle has not yet chosen his top college/university for the fall.



Gridiron Grads Sign NLOI

Two Kennedy Seniors have signed National Letters of Intent to play college football next year. David Keogh will be playing for Curry College in Boston. Liam McManus will be playing for SUNY Maritime in the Bronx, NY. As seniors, David and Liam helped lead the team to a winning record for the first time in years.



Mind, Body and Spirit:

The Quest for New Students with Mr. Bruder



We caught Brian Bruder at a Bad Time. It's the eve of Kennedy Catholic's Accepted Students Day, which for the Director of Admissions is like the week before Christmas for Santa Claus. Every child who was accepted into Kennedy gets an invite to the big blowout the night of February 1st, and it's the last opportunity for admissions, guidance, faculty, coaches, and student volunteers to communicate the message about why someone should elect to go Kennedy Catholic.

"But out of all the groups helping out, our best salespeople are our current students," Mr. Bruder points out. "They symbolize to a mother or father in attendance that night, 'That could be my son! That could be my daughter! This is the right fit for us.'"

This is Mr. Bruder's second year as Kennedy Catholic's Director of Admissions and spit polish pit boss. He joined the school in 2014 and has been teaching Global II, Civics, and Economics for ten years. He attended down-county rival Iona Prep before getting his marketing degree at

Fordham University and his Masters in Education at Mercy College.

So, by training, Mr. Bruder is a marketer and marketers, of course, sell things. From a marketer's point of view, then, what's Kennedy's biggest selling point?

"The best selling points are that we are college prep, we have great facilities here, we are generally affordable in the marketplace, we reinforce Christian values, and we are unapologetically Catholic," Mr. Bruder told us. "There is also that small matter about the return on investment: our students consistently secure scholarship dollars to top academic institutions around the country including military academies. Last year's class garnered over 29 million dollars in scholarships."

Marketers all have "elevator pitches" and we wanted to hear Mr. Bruder's. Let's say you have just five minutes to spare. You can't give a prospective student a tour of the whole school, so where do you take him?

"I will take him to the heart of the school,

and that's St. Mary's Chapel," he explained. "It communicates the spirit and Catholic heritage of our school and how it started and how that translated. It was purposefully built right in the heart of the school."

Outside of the run-up to Accepted Students Night, the Admissions Department also gets busy when Kennedy brings in transfer students. This usually occurs towards the end of the 1st semester and later, closer to June. Five to ten percent of the Kennedy Catholic student population at any given time are transfer students, and that's kind of a big deal, Mr. Bruder told us. They come from public schools, other Catholic schools in the area, and, as of this week, they come from Russia.

"For the first time in Kennedy history we have two students from Moscow," he explained. "One is a 9th grader and one is a 10th grader. They are both hockey players, and apparently heard about the great education that (Kennedy Alumnus and NJ Devils' defenseman) Steve Santini got here, how he was able to balance hockey and academics. Their parents want them to be educated in the United States. One has already signed a commitment letter to attend the University of Connecticut."

When not planning a year ahead or dealing with a sudden influx of Soviet students, the Admissions Department handles the highly successful "Gael for a Day" Program.

"It's an opportunity for interested 7th or 8th graders to come and visit Kennedy Catholic for a day," Mr. Bruder told us.

“The best selling points are that we are college prep, we have great facilities here, we are generally affordable in the marketplace, we reinforce Christian values, and we are unapologetically Catholic.”



“They are paired up with a current 9th grader who might be from the same town or went to the same school, someone who can shed some light on their daily commute, or may have the same interests in sports. They go and visit class to class; they meet the teachers, the coaches, the instructors in the Art Department, and the conductors of the orchestras and bands. I like to tell them when they come in, ‘don’t be nervous, just be a sponge, and absorb the day.’ We want it to be the right fit, we want them to walk away from Kennedy Catholic saying, ‘Y’know what? This is where I need to be. This is my home.’

I always tell an 8th grader that we are not

only going to develop your mind and body here, but we are also going to develop your spirit. We are not only going to make you into a good student, but we are going to make sure you are prepared to be successful in life.”

Sitting atop the admissions mountain, Mr. Bruder is in a unique position to discern what ties all the students accepted into Kennedy together. What connections do all these students – many traveling many miles away daily – share?

“We are all linked by a common faith, we are all linked by the desire to excel, and we all want to be, as our motto says, ‘We are

courageous, we are compassionate, we are Kennedy Catholic,” Mr. Bruder says. But he urges us not to mistake the Kennedy student body for the Kennedy community as a whole, for that is grander still.

“The Kennedy community is anybody who ever walked through these doors: alumni, family, parents. It is current faculty and past faculty. The Kennedy Catholic community is a strong one, a loyal one, it’s one that future graduates are going to be proud to be part of.”

If you know someone who is interested in becoming a Kennedy Gael, invite them to visit: KennedyCatholic.org/Admissions

No Free Swings at Bat: *Mrs. Gerrity Breaks Down “College Prep”*



This week Kennedy Catholic sophomores, juniors and seniors will be attending their third in-house college fair of the school year. During their time at Kennedy, students will attend eight college fairs. At 50-60 college admissions counselors per fair, that's a lot of college representation and preparation.

“It is a philosophy,” acknowledges Christine Gerrity, Kennedy Catholic's Director of Guidance. “It is an attitude in the school. When I meet with freshmen and their parents at orientation, I like to stress that ‘college prep starts now.’ We just don't start talking about college in junior year, it starts as a 9th grader.”

Mrs. Gerrity is in her third year at Kennedy Catholic, having joined the school from Good Counsel's guidance department. Since then, she has tripled the number of fairs held each year, and has boosted the number of college reps attending each one, considerably.

But still... do we really need to start this whole “college prep” thing in 9th grade?

“It kind of sounds ridiculous,” Mrs. Gerrity conceded, “because what could a 9th grader be doing about college? He's busy being a 9th grader. But it's the little things: the little pieces in the Kennedy climate, the way we put the onus on our students to engage their teachers directly, start talking to adults, learn how to talk to adults, have email relationships with their teachers – college is not going to snapchat you! – all that is very collegiate behavior.”

Although she doesn't have freshmen filling out FAFSA forms, Mrs. Gerrity does believe that it is never too early for them to be proactive about what ends up on their high school transcript.

“It is a complete fallacy to think that you can become an ‘A’ student in junior year and that it is going to matter,” Mrs.

Gerrity warns. “The college admissions climate is so hyper-competitive – it has been on a trajectory straight up! We are seeing alarming numbers of applicants in huge pools, and the priorities in a landscape like that are GPAs and test scores. I hate to say it, but that's what is going to keep our students on the table in a heavy and aggressive admissions review. Cumulative GPAs are going to be born in early July after junior year closes, and that number consists of freshman, sophomore and junior year grades. There really are not any free swings at bat any more for these kids.”

This is why Kennedy Catholic students take a PSAT exam in 9th grade. They'll take it again – “practice assessments,” Mrs. Gerrity calls them – in sophomore year, before taking the “real” PSAT in the beginning of junior year. All of this is a warm-up for the main event, the SAT, taken the following spring.

“When we turn the corner for January of junior year, that's when we have our College Information Night for parents, a



“It is a complete fallacy to think that you can become an ‘A’ student in junior year and that it is going to matter,” Mrs. Gerrity warns.

really comprehensive presentation. Next, I start meeting with each and every junior individually, I start asking about where they are in the process,” she explained.

“But we do a very good job of not over-serving the details. I know parents really want to get their hands around every little detail, but they don’t need to know how to take the engine apart until senior year. So I try to measure what I deliver, I ask them to hold my hand, ‘we’re going to get through it,’ and get the student to buy in.”

That student “buy-in” is essential because although Mrs. Gerrity may have to hold some parents’ hands, success requires that the student step up.

“It’s the student’s voice that these counselors like to hear,” she said. “They are very impressed when the student makes the phone call, engages the adult and asks the tough questions.”

More and more, these tough questions are being asked at a local Starbucks or Panera Bread. Although colleges are conducting fewer interviews with candidates in recent years, many of them are being conducted at coffee shops near the students’ high school, and not on the college campus. Duke, the University of North Carolina, Providence, Yale, Georgetown and Notre Dame are among the colleges who have been favoring these local interviews.

One notion that Mrs. Gerrity is quick to disabuse is that all academics are anti-climactic after junior year.

“We do not support our students weakening their transcripts for senior year. We encourage them to take advantage of any rigorous work that they can, keep the trajectory going. The colleges are going to ask, ‘This is great, what you did in 9, 10 and 11, but let’s see what you are doing senior year,’ and they don’t want to see basket-weaving and bed-making after you have taken three APs in your junior year.”

This makes especially good sense at Kennedy, where electives in computer science, bio-technology and robotics programming are available to seniors – many of whom go on to pursue these subjects in college.

“A lot of engineering programs, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) are trending; pre-med, bio-medical, and the humanities are still huge,” Mrs. Gerrity ticked off the college majors most popular among Kennedy graduates in the



past three years. “There has also been a big spike in nursing, we saw it start last year. The whole health sciences field, which exploded 4-5 years ago, is continuing to trend.”

That’s not to say there is any homogeneity among the college paths Kennedy students are taking. They are, quite literally, all over the map.

“As demonstrated by where our students do end up going, the message is, ‘you can get there from here,’” Mrs. Gerrity points out. “You can get to an Ivy from here, you can get to a service academy (we do that every year), you can get to a fine arts school. We are starting to get some acceptances in California, we have an international acceptance, we are going west of the Mississippi more, we are going south more.”

Which brings us back to all these college fairs. Now, the typical college fair is held at some central location (the Westchester County Center in White Plains is a popular choice locally) and students from around the region all file into the same hub, making it a very convenient and efficient exercise for the college admissions counselors involved. So why would as many as sixty of them flock to Somers three times a year just to see only Kennedy students?

“When the college representatives realize the quality of the student they are coming to see, that’s why they are coming,” Mrs. Gerrity explained. “They know they are only seeing one school’s worth of students, but it’s worth their morning to see Kennedy students.”

2017 Student Council Tops Fundraising Goal

For nearly the last ten years, the graduating seniors have given a gift to the school. Through fundraising efforts, “Welcome” signs, walkways, patios, and a seal of the school in the Commons have been provided to make improvements to the building and grounds around the school. This year, the senior class chose their gift to be a press box for the turf field. Their fundraising began at the start of the school year and will continue to until May just before graduation. Their goal of raising \$30,000 was accomplished by early March, so each additional dollar raised helps to offset the second half of the total price of the press box.

In addition to the numerous events they have organized for their own fundraising, the Student Council has participated in a number of Advancement and Enrollment events to represent Kennedy Catholic.



Meenu Johnkutty Awarded Top Prize



Each year Maryknoll magazine holds an essay contest for middle and high schools students. This year they chose the theme to be “Caring for Our Common Home” based on the teachings of Pope Francis and his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si*. Pope Francis states that Saint Francis of Assisi was a great influence on his faith and ultimately his direction as the pope because of his love for ecology and the poor.

We would like to congratulate Meenu Johnkutty '17 who was recently awarded first place out of over 7,000 essay writers from Maryknoll's essay contest. Maryknoll writes...

The 2016 essay theme, “Caring for Our Common Home,” referenced Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, in which he calls on all people to respect and to stop exploiting our world and its limited and diminishing resources. “The earth cries out to us,” wrote Pope Francis, “because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.”

Her winning essay, “Before It's Too Late,” garnered a \$1,000 prize and recognition in their upcoming edition of Maryknoll Magazine.



Before It's Too Late

I am running on the back trails of the small city of Somers, New York, crushing decaying vibrant orange, red, and yellow leaves underneath my feet. The streams alongside the trail gurgle as small fish scurry away at the sound of my feet pounding on the dirt. The air is crisp and fresh, and I am in awe of this remarkable splendor. But, the scene changes rapidly as I board the train which will bring me back home. The train cuts through paths made in the woods, where soda cans and cigarette boxes are carelessly strewn on the tracks and the streams are tinted brown with waste and carry plastic bottles instead of live fish. My eyes which were once overwhelmed by the beauty of a New York autumn are now saddened at our failed responsibility as a human race to take care of our spinning blue and green planet.

Though many might not realize it, our world is slowly slipping away from our fingers. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, since the Industrial Revolution, CO₂ levels have increased by 30%, methane concentrations have doubled, and nitrous oxide levels have gone up 15% (USTA). When greenhouse gases accumulate in extraordinary levels, the amount of heat trapped in our atmosphere increases as well. This warming of the planet, termed global warming, has disastrous effects, ranging from the melting of polar ice caps to the extinction of many wildlife species. Our responsibility for this global issue as well as our duty to fix it are immense. Thus, the need to heed Pope Francis' call to "protect our common home" must not be taken lightly, save we run the risk of losing our planet forever.

Our only solution to this pressing issue is collective global action. Anaerobic digestion is one solution which has been gaining popularity all over the world. Personally, I became passionate about global warming as a freshman in high school when I researched and wrote a winning essay about the benefits of implementing biodigesters in rural communities. During a visit to my parents' village in India, I was shocked to see mounds of trash burning on the sides of the dirt roads. However, if biodigesters were used in these communities, this burning trash could be used

to produce biogas. The benefits of biogas are extraordinary; ranging from home heating to developing rural communities. (Siwatibau. S). Anaerobic digestion has already coined many successes in the China and other western European countries. Even in the U.S., the students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh piloted an anaerobic digestion program which produced enough biogas to power up to 10% of the 13,500 student institution! Thus, with the implementation of anaerobic digestion, our landfills, rife with biodegradable material, can be siphoned into biogas production which can power many appliances in the future.

Along with supporting a future run with renewable energy sources like the sun, water, and wind, we must also protest projects within the United States which threaten our future as a clean energy superpower. The Dakota Access Pipeline is one such project which threatens this future. This pipeline would transport over 470,000 barrels of crude oil from Canada to the U.S., thus delaying the transition from fossil fuels to alternative sources of energy. Protesters have been protesting this pipeline since October 2014 (Huffington Post). Thus, the time to switch to alternative forms of energy, which will stop our dependence on a finite fossil fuel supply, is now. We must protest and join in on the fight against greedy corporations that do not weigh environmental risks as heavily.

As a teenager passionate about global warming and climate change, I want to see a future where my generation and future generations will not have to pay for the damage caused by greed and self-driven interests. What good is a world that has profited from big oil companies when the very world we are standing on will no longer be the planet earth that we know - the mother earth that has held us and nourished us? What will we say to our grandchildren who will look into our eyes and ask, "Why didn't you stop this?" By heeding the Pope's call and taking action within our communities, we can and must slow down climate change before it is too late.

Works Cited available on Kennedy's website



Alumni Notes

Send us your Alumni notes by visiting KennedyCatholic.org/Alumni

We want to hear about your personal and career accomplishments, important life moments, and anything else you wish to share

Marvel at this Class of 2006 Graduate



Chris Robinson '06 graduated from Kennedy and went directly to Emerson College to study screen writing. While attending the Boston school he became involved with a print journal which stoked his interest in publishing and eventually led to an internship at Marvel Comics. Shortly after graduating from Emerson, he moved to Los Angeles, and started working everywhere he could doing things like script coverage, a variety of hourly jobs, publishing internships, and freelance editorial work. A few years later he invested everything he had into a self-published science fiction anthology. He shared this book with the people he interned for at Marvel and they brought him in to interview shortly thereafter. He now edits X-Men titles and the new Black Panther series by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Heard it through the Grapevine

Mr. Dominick and Mrs. Dawn Oddo '82 have let us know they are celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary this July. Here's to many more years of wedding bliss.

Mr. Brian and Mrs. Shannon (Morris) Zawiski '02 have recently celebrated their 1st anniversary. Here's to a long, loving life together.

After 4 years of dating, Matthew Perez '06 and his fiancée Stephanie recently were joined in Holy Matrimony. Matt shared that he proposed to Stephanie during a trip to Europe, in front of her great-grandmother's church in St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Although Sarah Marbach '06 just ran her 8th marathon, she's most excited about walking down the aisle this summer when she weds her fiancé, Stephen. Congratulations, Sarah.

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Ventimiglia gave us the news that their daughter, Chelsea '02 has become the Director of Private Parties and Affairs at Modern Barn Restaurant in Armonk, NY. Chelsea is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America with a Bachelors Degree in Business Management.

Congratulations to Tori Towey '13 on her acceptance into Clarkson University Masters of Occupational Therapy program. We can't wait to hear about the great things you learn next year, Tori.



Hart '76 Pens Catholic Poetry Book

The Library of the Presidents, our renamed library at Kennedy, was gifted a copy of *A Cut-and-Paste Country* by Kathleen Hart '76. Her book is a series of poems which lift your soul to God, which can be purchased on Amazon.

Combining Cycling and Civic Duty

Many have traveled the country going city to city, town to town, by car, but only the truly motivated have done it on a bike. Kennedy Catholic Class of 2011 graduate Marina Cotarelo, a recent Penn State graduate, did just that. She heard about an organization called Bike and Build, which according to their mission statement “empowers young adults for a lifetime of service and civic engagement.” As a member of the group, these young adults prepare for the summer’s adventure by completing training rides, raising \$5,000, and then setting off from the east coast to travel the country, build houses, and help those who need it the most before reaching the west coast. Their cross-country adventure took place over 78 days with 16 build days and mandatory rest days. Locally the organization worked in Danbury, CT, and Harrisburg, PA which Marina described as highlights of the trip because she was able to give back to the areas of her home and school life. Today Marina is continuing that sense of civic duty by running for a position on her local government.

To learn more about Bike and Build, visit BikeandBuild.org

Please drive carefully and always keep your eye out for riders and runners on shared roadways.



A BRIEF LOOK BACK

From incorporation of KCHS until today

Incorporation of Kennedy Catholic High School. Board of Trustees has been established.

2009

Renovation of the gymnasium including a resurfacing of the floor, new bleachers, and new doors.

2012

Complete renovation of our Library. Renamed "The Library of the Presidents."

This room update is a "stop you in your tracks" work of art.

2014

LED lighting and new ceilings in the hallways of the academic wing.

2014

2011

New state-of-the-art turf main athletic and softball fields are created behind the old football field and track, as well as a premier baseball field located above the Kennedy lake.

2013

Renovation of our athletic locker rooms. New lockers, updated bathrooms, and a new layout were established.

2013

New ceilings and LED lighting throughout the Cafeteria and Commons replaced the old, inefficient incandescent bulbs.

Ongoing Fundraising Projects

Track and Field
Lights for the Main Athletic Field
Athletic Center
Lights and Ceilings in Classrooms

How Can You Help?

Donation / Matching Gift Program
Attend a Kennedy Event
Update Your Alumni Information
(See Next Page For More Information)

Computer Lab renovation included updating the physical space with new ceilings and lights, fans, SmartBoard, desks and chairs, and computers.

2014

Student and visitor restroom remodels throughout the building might not sound glamorous, but they were needed.

2014

Kennedy is going to be home to Friday Night Lights on our main athletic fields soon, thanks to you, our friends and family. Help light the way for our future athletes.

2017

Thanks to a partnership between the fundraising efforts of the senior class and the school, Kennedy Athletics will have a Press Box overlooking the Main Athletic Field.

2017

2016

The original 440 yard track was updated to be 400 meters and resurfaced. A new red track with white lines will host the newest crop of harriers.

2016

Kennedy has entered Phase 1 of a plan to secure and protect students in the case of an emergency by installing a security system in and outside of the building.

<<< WE NEED YOUR HELP >>>

Thanks to the gift from an anonymous alumni donor, Kennedy Catholic has secured a matching donor for the 2017 calendar year. Every dollar raised between now and December 31 will be matched up to \$50,000.

Learn more by visiting KennedyCatholic.org/Alumni

See what groups and graduating classes gave to Kennedy.

A gift can come from direct contributions or the proceeds from attending a Kennedy fundraising event. To learn how you can participate, visit: KennedyCatholic.org/Support-Us

Donation Name	Amount
Class of 1953 (1 records)	\$300
Class of 1955 (3 records)	\$300
Class of 1957 (5 records)	\$290
Class of 1961 (1 record)	\$50
Class of 1962 (1 record)	\$1,000
Class of 1963 (1 record)	\$50
Class of 1964 (1 record)	\$1,000
Class of 1965 (3 records)	\$5,075
Class of 1967 (1 record)	\$250
Class of 1968 (7 records)	\$1,050
Class of 1969 (5 records)	\$1,700
Class of 1970 (4 records)	\$225
Class of 1971 (5 records)	\$11,275
Class of 1972 (6 records)	\$785
Class of 1973 (8 records)	\$2,425
Class of 1974 (6 records)	\$550
Class of 1975 (4 records)	\$425
Class of 1976 (4 records)	\$285
Class of 1977 (2 records)	\$150
Class of 1978 (4 records)	\$420
Class of 1979 (3 records)	\$175
Class of 1980 (2 records)	\$1,250
Class of 1981 (11 records)	\$735
Class of 1982 (10 records)	\$4,755

Donation Name	Amount
Class of 1983 (5 records)	\$550
Class of 1984 (3 records)	\$90
Class of 1985 (3 records)	\$1,025
Class of 1986 (5 records)	\$776
Class of 1987 (5 records)	\$960
Class of 1988 (11 records)	\$1,200
Class of 1989 (9 records)	\$1,895
Class of 1990 (2 record)	\$297
Class of 1991 (13 records)	\$1,150
Class of 1992 (3 records)	\$2,567
Class of 1993 (2 records)	\$196
Class of 1994 (4 records)	\$1,090
Class of 1995 (1 record)	\$50
Class of 1996 (1 record)	\$50
Class of 1997 (7 records)	\$375
Class of 1998 (1 record)	\$300
Class of 1999 (5 records)	\$1,175
Class of 2002 (1 record)	\$415
Class of 2009 (2 records)	\$1,225
Class of 2011 (1 records)	\$20
Class of 2017 (3 records)	\$600
Class of 2018 (2 records)	\$400

Donation Name	Amount
Clergy/Religious (5 records)	\$1,500
Faculty (41 records)	\$9,130
Fam. other than Parent (8 records)	\$2,315
HH (18 records)	\$2,025
Other (53 records)	\$39,384
Parent (303 records)	\$150,745
Past Parent (59 records)	\$12,395
Current Students (18 records)	\$32,519
Vendor (19 records)	\$6,097

Grand Totals (707 records) \$307,036



LOOKING FOR AN AFFORDABLE 1-WEEK SUMMER CLINIC FOR YOUR RISING 7TH, 8TH, OR 9TH GRADE STUDENTS? *Kennedy has two options:*

Mind, Body, Spirit Week (June 26-30)

Who: Boys & Girls entering 7th and 8th grades in September 2017 and Kennedy's incoming class of 2021.

Workshop Philosophy: Through the development of Mind, Body and Spirit, Kennedy Catholic's students strive always for excellence and the highest standards in Catholic education. Join us the week of June 27th on the campus of Kennedy Catholic and get a head start in developing your Mind, Body and Spirit. Each Day includes:

Mind: Comprehensive study-skills and high school readiness session that teaches middle-school aged students how to study effectively, organize, prepare for tests, plan and also learn time management strategies that are important for success and striving for excellence at the high school level.

Body: Sports clinics on Kennedy's state-of-the art athletic facilities. Each clinic is hosted by a Kennedy Catholic coaching staff member. Attendees can participate in art class, media arts, basketball, lacrosse, baseball, soccer, softball, and track & field.

Spirit: Each day will conclude with a prayer service held by Kennedy Catholic's Principal Father Mark Vaillancourt.

Summer Sports Clinics

Week of July 10th:

Football & Girls Volleyball

Week of July 17th:

Boys Lacrosse & Girls Softball

Week of July 24th

Boys Baseball & Girls Basketball

Week of July 31st

Boys Basketball & Girls Lacrosse



Visit our website to learn about prices, times, and other important information:

KennedyCatholic.org/Summer



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CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

LINKS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: KENNEDYCATHOLIC.ORG



Members of the John Stamos Cooking Club collected 700 Easter baskets for the Cardinal McCloskey Community Center, carrying on Sister Barbara's Easter Tradition. Read more about the club and their efforts in the next edition.

IN THE NEXT EDITION

Kennedy Student Wins First Prize at the Greenwich Film Festival

Kennedy Robotics Attends World Championships in Kentucky

Spring Concert Pictures and Story

Spring Sports Recap / Fall Sports Preview

Graduation Pictures

President's Dinner Celebration

700 Easter Baskets Collected