

THE GAEEL

The Magazine for Alumni and Parents of St. Mary's/Kennedy Catholic
Volume 26 – Spring 2018



IN THIS EDITION

***CLASS OF '96 ACETO HOMECOMING
ADDAMS FAMILY MUSICAL PHOTOS
GARAY DRAFTED BY THE METS
KENNEDY FUTURE ENGINEERS***



When You're An Addams

The Kennedy Players performed Broadway's smash hit, *The Addams Family*, this March. Peek inside the magazine for a story on Kennedy's new musical director and pictures from the show!





Students pictured above were involved with this year's 7th Annual Kennedy Catholic Blood Drive. Thank you to everyone who came to support this worthy cause.

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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Annual Golf Classic - **TBA**

Annual Auction - **November 17, 2018**

To learn about these events and more, visit our website:

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PUBLISHER:

Rev. Mark G. Vaillancourt, Ph.D.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Fred Compton P'15, '18

ART DIRECTOR:

Jacob Bergmeier

MANAGING EDITOR:

Rich Kirby

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Gina Cantarella P'16

Fred Compton P'15, '18

Carley Gilmore '18

Rich Kirby

Rev. Mark G. Vaillancourt, Ph.D.

Madison Waldron '19

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Phil Aceto (Movie)

Jacob Bergmeier

Brian Bruder (Retreat)

Lifetouch

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Fred Compton P'15, '18

Rosemary Davin P'05, '07, '11, '13

Rich Kirby

Mary McGown

Stephen Schmidt

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President's Message



Dear Friend of Kennedy Catholic,

At Kennedy Catholic we often speak about “the Kennedy Spirit.” It’s one of those intangibles that is difficult to describe but quickly recognized when witnessed. It moves and motivates students, faculty, parents, alumni and everyone in the community. As I was reviewing this issue of *The Gael*, I was overcome by how big a part the Kennedy Spirit played in nearly all the articles.

The Kennedy spirit was a strong and palpable presence in the wings of the Kennedy Players’ recent production of “The Addams Family.” A nor’easter that knocked out power to the area did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm and can-do attitude of the cast, crew and orchestra from presenting our greatest musical in recent memory.

The Kennedy Spirit was the sixth player on the court all season for our girls’ varsity basketball team, who had an extraordinarily strong year. They were the number one ranked Catholic/private school all season long according to Journal News/LoHud, and were ranked number one in the state for two weeks during the season. *The Gael* reviews their phenomenal season, as well as the great efforts in boys’ basketball, winter track and swimming, in a varsity sports recap.

And have you heard? One of the products of our sports program, Gavin Garay ‘15, has just been drafted by the NY Mets! Another alumnus, Phil Aceto ‘96, a product of our fine arts program, is an

award-winning filmmaker who just shot his latest movie on the Kennedy campus. We talk to both proud Kennedy grads in this issue.

The Kennedy Spirit is even felt overseas in the homes of the parents of our burgeoning enrollment of Asian students. We will take you behind the scenes and on the road with Joanna Kalantarov who both chairs our social studies department and manages our highly successful international students program.

As this issue goes to press, Kennedy’s robotics team is preparing to compete at the VEX League World Finals in Kentucky, having dominated local competitions all season. A less well-known – but gaining in momentum – STEM competitor is our Science Olympiad team, now in their second year. Get to know some of the members of the team, who this season journeyed as far away as Brown University in Rhode Island.

Earlier this year Kennedy’s facilities and campus played host to a three-day retreat organized by Fearless Ministries. Over 300 young people were dosed in not only the Kennedy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit as well. It was such a spiritual – and fun! – experience that we are already working to make it a recurring fixture on our events calendar.

“Kennedy Spirit” may mean something different to everyone, but that’s a credit to the diversity of our curriculum and extra-curricular activities. It lights up auditoriums, fills gyms, drives students, inspires alumni and fills everyone it touches with pride. Hopefully you will see and feel a little bit of that spark within the pages of this magazine.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Vaillancourt'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large, sweeping 'M' and 'V'.

Rev. Mark Vaillancourt, Ph.D.

President and Principal

Kennedy's Chinese Connections

by Rich Kirby

Our relations with China at the federal level may be a bit bumpy, but on the Kennedy Catholic level, the bonds could not be stronger or more cordial. Twenty-eight Chinese students are enrolled in Kennedy, and more have already committed for September.

Mrs. Joanna Kalantarov, chair of Kennedy's social studies department, manages the international students program, now in its eighth year. Her experience is that many Chinese parents are anxious for their children to receive an American college education, and that desire steers them toward Kennedy.

"They like us because we are a college prep school," Kalantarov told *The Gael*. "They like the fact that we are strong on academics. We have a PSAT program that launched this year – that has been a strong point for many of the parents. They like that we offer a strong AP program and a dual enrollment program with several colleges. They are also very concerned about where our graduates end up, they are very motivated to get into the top American schools."

Kalantarov currently works very closely with three agencies in China who are her boots on the ground overseas. She provides them with marketing materials, the companies provide her with curious and qualified candidates. (Before being accepted into the program, the international students must display a certain level of English proficiency.) The agencies also facilitate communications with students' parents once their children are enrolled at Kennedy.

When speaking with those parents, Kalantarov tries to accentuate the positive, making a point of forwarding along photos of the children performing in a musical, at a concert, or "good news" emails from teachers.

A new learning tactic, introduced this year, is the "international homeroom." Proctored by Kalantarov and English teacher Mrs. Normile,

it's an opportunity for international students to regularly absorb conversational English and fine-tune their study skills.

"The students are realizing that we are here to support them, and their academics are a very strong focus of what the school wants out of them," Kalantarov said. "We don't want to see them fail or have to repeat a course."

A big factor in the success of international students at Kennedy has been the curriculum-wide implementation of technology. The iPad has been especially advantageous, as students are able to quickly look up translations and immerse themselves in content-based vocabulary.

In the end, however, the school's greatest recruitment and retention advantage may be the Kennedy Spirit.



“Overall I think just the atmosphere of the school draws them in, the fact that we are accommodating, we’re accepting, and we want to support them,” Kalantarov said. “I think many of the parents want to know that if they are sending their kids to New York, and they’re remaining in China and not able to see them for the next six months, that they are in a school where someone is going to care about them.”

Kalantarov has “cloud meetings” with the parents of the international students regularly. Translators and account managers from the local Chinese agencies are part of the call as well.

“They like us because we are a college prep school,” Kalantarov told The Gael. “They like the fact that we are strong on academics. We have a PPAI program that launched this year – that has been a strong point for many of the parents.”

While the beneficial effect of a Kennedy education for the international students could not be more clear, their influx has borne subtle benefits for the natives as well.

“This past month we celebrated Chinese New Year in the school cafeteria. Many American kids are learning to understand a different culture and customs, and understand what it is like for a student to come into another country and really struggle.



“One thing I will say: Our students are always willing to help. They are very quick to help them use an iPad, or take on a particular assignment. So I think it has, one, helped them understand a different culture, and two, allowed them to demonstrate what the Kennedy spirit is about. I have been very proud of them, they are always willing to help, always willing to find out a little bit more.”

Speak with Mrs. Kalantarov for even a short time and you realize that management of Kennedy’s international students program is much more than just a side gig to her. In fact, the focus of her master’s thesis was the Sheltered Instruction Operations Protocol, or SIOP®. The hallmark of a SIOP® classroom is a systematic, consistent, and concurrent focus on teaching both content concepts and academic language at the same time.

As Kalantarov explained, “If you want international students to succeed, if you want students with lower academic skills like reading comprehension to succeed in a class like social studies, you need to break down the basics to content vocabulary. And once you do that, it becomes a simplified process.”

Kalantarov’s passion for helping young people for whom English is a second language becomes easier to understand when you realize its roots are personal. She immigrated to the U.S. from her native Poland when she was in the first grade.

“So I certainly understand from a cultural perspective what these students are feeling,” she said. “Many members of my family, including my older siblings, had difficulties studying here in the U.S. due to the language barrier.”

MAJOR LEAGUE ACHIEVEMENT

Gavin Garay '15 Drafted by Mets by Rich Kirby

Another Kennedy alumnus is making his mark in major league sports. Last June, Gavin Garay '15 was drafted in the 26th round by the NY Mets.

Garay acknowledges that Kennedy may be a school best known for its academics, yet the culture of competitive athletics at the school is pervasive, and deep.

"Obviously 'student' comes before 'athlete,' but they loved their sports," Garay told *The Gael*. "They wanted us to win."

And win Garay and teammates did. The Gaels baseball team had winning seasons every year he was there. He credits Gaels coach Bob Fletcher not only for his inspiration, but for keeping him rooted in the basics.

"From Coach Fletcher I learned to work hard, respect the game and play the right way. He would always push us to get better."

Garay attended St. Petersburg College in Florida after spending his freshman year at St. John's. The Mets drafted him in his sophomore year at St. Petersburg.

Baseball was a big deal at every school Garay attended, Kennedy included. He believes a robust athletics program makes a fundamental contribution to a strong education.

"When you go to a school that cares a great deal about the sports program it definitely plays a big role," he said. "Sports allows for kids to develop and become better people. At the same time it teaches you discipline, leadership qualities, how to be a good teammate, and how to work with others."

The 6-foot-3, 235-pound first baseman was a stand-out in his one season at St. Petersburg, batting .357 with five homers, 40 runs batted in and 24 extra base hits. He received first team All-Conference honors.

For whatever reason, the Mets do not seem to draft many players from the northeast, which Garay, a lifelong Yankee fan, believes makes his achievement that much more notable.

In the recently concluded off-season, Garay played for the Kingsport Mets in Tennessee. As this issue of *The Gael* is going to press, Garay is still waiting to hear whether he will be reporting to spring training for the farm club or the flagship. One thing is for certain, however: Garay is grateful for wherever his lucky breaks take him.

"I pray every night, and before all my games," he said. "I thank God for this opportunity to play baseball."



Kennedy Hosts Memorable "Fearless" Retreat

by Madison Waldron '19

Over 300 teens packed their bags and their rosaries and headed off to our own Kennedy Catholic High School for a fun and faith filled weekend this past December when Kennedy hosted "Fearless," a retreat experience for students in 8th through 12th grade. Both the school building itself and the Kennedy grounds provided the backdrop and support enabling the attendees to experience a spiritual and fun event with both old and new friends. The Fearless Retreat provides the teens three days, and yes, two nights spent sleeping right in the classrooms to experience their journey to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. When the teens weren't involved with activities such as basketball, KanJam,

ultimate frisbee, soccer and the ever popular, laser tag, they attended Mass, praise and worship, and Eucharistic Adoration with their peers. Those at the retreat also benefited from the presence and testimonies of guests including the Franciscan Friars, the Sisters of the Renewal, and diocesan clergy.

Fearless Retreats are dedicated to leading teens to a personal encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. With this intent, the retreat provides amazing opportunities for the participants to spend time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration. The Adoration during the retreat is not something the students present will soon forget, as at Kennedy, it was filled with lively praise and worship

right in the comfort of our commons. On top of Adoration, there was a mass every day, opportunities for confession, and many interesting discussions to listen to, including a Q&A session. Also, attendees took part in a Eucharistic procession, which was led outside through the school grounds and wooded area as a light blanket of snow fell beautifully on the procession.

Kennedy was a perfect location for this very successful retreat for everyone involved. Providing both a facility and an experience for teenagers to grow in their relationship and love for God made for a very impactful weekend. Masses and Eucharistic Adoration allowed for growth in the participants' prayer life alongside other teens in the Catholic community, which is something they will certainly remember. As they enjoyed a weekend together, they lived both day and night in communion with others through all the blessings and experiences the three days provided.

A Fearless Retreat is not your average retreat, and it goes to show how having fun and living your faith truly can go hand in hand. Friendships were formed and people's faith was strengthened due to the wonderful opportunities offered by the Fearless Retreat right at our school. Attending this retreat offered the perfect opportunity for students to step back from the distractions of everyday life and to enjoy the moment in the presence of Jesus Christ.



Everybody Coming Together: 'Addams Family' Triumphs



The Kennedy Players promised that their 2018 production of "The Addams Family" would be their greatest ever. It was a bold, even reckless, statement, considering their long history of mounting stellar musicals. When a nor'easter blew into northern Westchester, forcing the rescheduling of the Friday night performance into a Saturday matinée, straining resources and shredding nerves, it appeared as though elemental forces might be punishing the Players for their hubris, like heroes in some Greek tragedy.

"The kids were fantastic about it, having to postpone Friday night's performance," said Mrs. Barbara Rue, who directed and choreographed

the show. "They understood, and were ready to do three shows back-to-back, two on Saturday and the final performance on Sunday. They came in at 10 a.m. on Saturday and were there 'til 10 p.m. Saturday night. Then came right back in again on Sunday. They knew what had to be done and they were ready and eager to do the show. We were all so proud of them!"

As the audiences in the packed houses can attest, the Kennedy Players delivered on their promises. It was really never in doubt, for as the cast and crew knew, a fair fight between the forces of nature and Mrs. Rue could only end one way.

In her first time helming a Kennedy musical, Rue has brought a renewed rigor and discipline to the theater program. Every bit of that could be seen on stage that first weekend in March.

But Shelby Bakker '18, who starred as Morticia in "The Addams Family," exposed the director's warm and fuzzy underbelly when she confided, "She bakes for us! She's the best! She comes in with cookies and cakes and such!"

For her part, Rue finds that the Kennedy students she works with are very open and responsive to the arts. In truth, she would like the opportunity to work with them more.

"I think it should be almost mandatory that a kid do a show," Rue told *The Gael*. "It's a great



experience. They see everybody coming together: the costume people may be in their own little unit, I'm doing my little thing here and there, but when it all comes together they are really seeing how important every unit is to make the show. I think that is just a wonderful experience for a kid, to see it all happen."

Born in Manhattan, Rue also lived in the Bronx, Queens and Long Island before returning to Manhattan. She has been a gypsy working professionally in the theater ever since she took off with a road company of "No, No, Nanette" when she was seventeen. She eventually made her way back to New York – and Broadway – appearing in "42nd Street" and with Ann Margaret and Mickey Rooney in "Sugar Babies."



Barbara Rue is Kennedy Catholic's new Musical Director

...and yes, those whispered rumors about her are true: Mrs. Rue was indeed a Rockette.

Residing now in Croton Falls, Rue has been active in the Westchester arts scene for a while. She was teaching dance at The Schoolhouse Theater in Croton Falls when one of her students, Briana Trainor '18, got her involved with the Kennedy Players during the final crunch of 2017's production of "The Boyfriend." Something clicked, and quickly, because Kennedy invited her back to run the whole magilla the next year.

Rue stays on the look-out for those infamous high school drama club egos, but has found them in short supply in the Kennedy Players. "I don't find it with this group," she said, but warned, "I always try to nip that sort of thing in the bud at the very beginning."

"I think theater... is like sports: you are part of a team, everyone counts, no one is inferior. The person who sweeps the floor is just as important to me as the main character. There are no degrees of importance, I truly believe that. Someone sewing a button on a costume is just as important as the lead to me, and they deserve credit."

As Rue got to know the members of "The Addams Family" cast and crew, she was impressed by their dedication but was also amazed by their ambitions. "I ask the kids what they are doing 'in life.' You know, what schools

they are looking into, and a lot of them are really going into some very heavy duty academic careers!"

This summer, as in previous years, Rue will be running a Broadway dance camp. But instead of The Schoolhouse, she hopes this time she can stage the performances in the Kennedy Catholic auditorium, which she describes as "a great facility."

"We are doing 'High School Musical' for ages 9 through 15. It gives kids a chance to get their feet wet."

Theater in American high schools is on the decline, Rue feels, making the resounding

success of "The Addams Family" all that more significant: "A lot of schools are losing their arts programs, so I am thrilled that Kennedy has something like this."

That said, Rue thinks that a dedicated dance program at Kennedy, even just as part of the run-up to the annual musical, would be a great addition to Kennedy's arts curriculum. Not many schools have dance programs, she knows, but as the Kennedy Community can now attest, Mrs. Rue aims high.

View more photos of the Spring Musical by visiting KennedyCatholic.Pixieset.com





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Spring Musical by visiting
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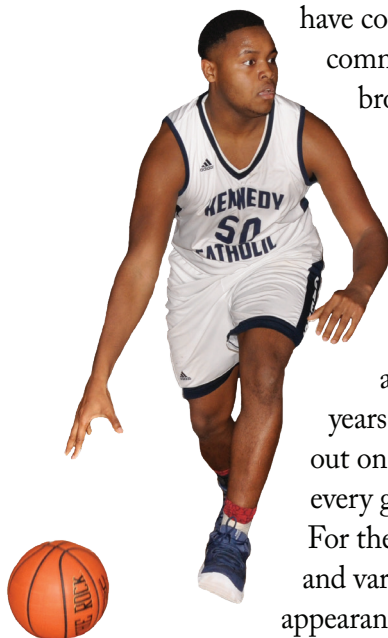


WINTER SPORTS

by Carley Gilmore '18



As the winter season comes to an end, we are called to reflect on the countless memories and experiences that distinguish Kennedy Catholic as an enriching school, especially the achievements of our winter athletic teams. A reflection of the great accomplishments of our student athletes helps us to examine how far we have come as one Kennedy Catholic community. The winter season brought success all around.



Boys' Basketball: According to senior Bryan Szpindor, Kennedy boys' basketball had a great season. "Even though our team was not as victorious as it has been in years prior, we stuck together, going out on the court and competing every game to the best of our ability." For the first time, the junior varsity and varsity cheerleading squads made appearances at the boys' basketball games, working hard to boost school spirit and team morale. They united the student body in support for our Gaels with great vigor. "There was a real sense of team spirit with this group of guys," said Szpindor.

Girls' Basketball: Girls' varsity basketball had a season marked by success and noteworthy improvement. The team put up a valiant effort in the semifinals against Spellman, losing by only 5 points, and finished second in their league for only the second time in their history. They were the number one ranked Catholic/private school all season long according to Journal News/LoHud, and were ranked number one in the state for two weeks during the season, having defeated four other state-ranked teams throughout the season. They also competed in two national showcases this year, playing in front of colleges from around the country. Overall, the Lady Gaels had a winning season with only three losses, beating their rival teams Maria Regina three times and Scanlan twice.

"I love my team," said Captain Lisa Cristiano. "Beating Scanlan was definitely a highlight of our season." This season, the team cheered on Alexis Suarez as she reached 1000 points in her basketball career as a junior and became the first female to do so at Kennedy, making her currently, the leading scorer in Kennedy Catholic history. Captain Vanessa Duarte was named the Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the Week and committed to play collegiately for Husson University. All in all, the team triumphed with their significant milestones and shared an unforgettable season.





Winter Track: Elektra Kirby had all positive things to say about the progress and achievements of her team throughout the season. Elektra placed 5th for the Varsity Girls' race, medalling in her 1500 meter run. Michael Dillulio ranked high in his 1600 meter run. Some of the meets were nine hours long, and Elektra noted that it was "reassuring to see teammates who did not have to run show up for moral support."



Swimming: The Kennedy girls' varsity swim team had a great season this year. The girls officially competed in the Catholic League, winning three of their meets. The teamwork shown by the girls and their skill in fast swimming allowed for the team to be successful. Many of the girls stepped up and swam four events every meet to support the team, including the 500 yard freestyle which is equivalent to 20 laps. Both experienced club swimmers and first time competitors improved greatly over the season. "I am very proud of the girls' dedication and performance this year," said Kennedy senior and captain, Sarah Duggan. "We are a family, and I will miss the girls and the team so much!"

The momentous triumphs that our Kennedy Catholic winter athletes have gained this school year accentuate the endless possibilities for overall athletic success in the upcoming spring season. As these milestones are met, it is important that we, as a Kennedy Catholic community, show our love and support for our Gaels. With teeming school spirit, there is no such thing as a loss.



Congratulations to Alexis Suarez '19 who scored 1000 points in the 2017-2018 season! #GoKCGaels



FUTURE ENGINEERS

Kennedy's Science Olympiad Team by Rich Kirby

When the Academy of Our Lady of Good Counsel shuttered in 2015, Kennedy Catholic not only picked up a number of their students, but those students' love for competitive science, as well. Kennedy Catholic's newest team, Science Olympiad, was born when two of those students asked Mrs. Georgia Ioannou, Kennedy's physics teacher, if they could start a team at their new school.



It's okay if you didn't know there was such a thing as competitive science. The games began in 1974, a one day affair involving fifteen high school teams from North and South Carolina. It has since grown to over 7,300 middle and high schools from all 50 states.

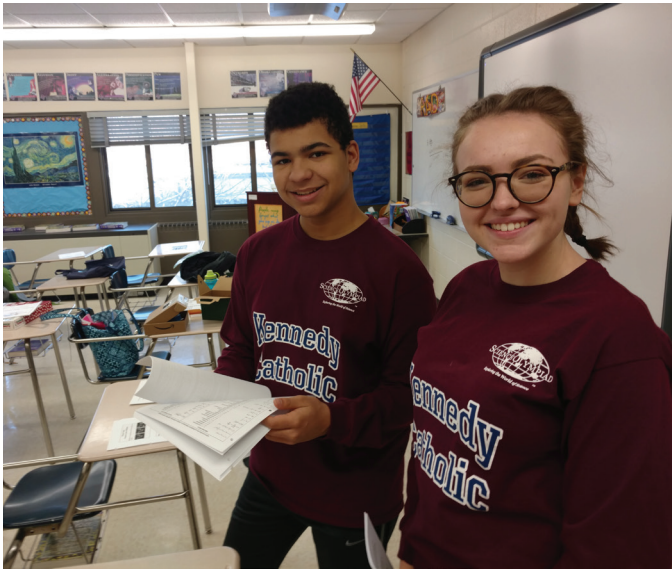
The Science Olympiad describes itself as an "academic track meet," with events like "Rocks & Minerals" and "Optics" taking the place of the 400-meters hurdles or discus throw. Teams may be up to 15 members, although some schools bring multiple teams, which allow for something like a frosh/JV/varsity pecking order.

"Last year I went to a coach's meeting, and that was a real eye opener!" said Ioannou, now the team's moderator. "We are trying to grow it. Next year, we will start it earlier. I want to build one good, solid team." She noted that, while other teams require students to pass a test before they are awarded a spot on the team, Kennedy will keep its roster "open."

It's a gradual process, but one that is still making great strides. This past season the team attended an invitational at Brown University in Rhode Island.

Tricia Curtin '19 admits she knew nothing about Science Olympiad when friends of hers on the team convinced her to join. "I had never thought about it, and I was, like, 'Oh my God! I'm going to

"I had never thought about it, and I was, like, Oh my God! I'm going to be such a nerd! But it was actually so much fun, and I learned a lot. I have decided I am going to do it next year too!"



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Taran Agnihotri had no fear of becoming a nerd. He was already waist-deep and loving it as a member of Kennedy’s highly-successful robotics team since his freshman year. He finds quite a bit of similarity between the two competitions.

“Both of them involve thinking and building,” he said. “At Science Olympiad, I did building events, such as ‘Hovercraft,’ in which we had to use two rotors and batteries and whatever was available to make a hovercraft that would move. That was a cool learning experience, just like in robotics where you work with motors and batteries and what-not to make mechanical things.”

But nerds do not live by hex wrenches and blow torches alone. Agnihotri owned that he found the competition in “Fermi” to be a bit on the more difficult side.

“It’s an event in which you have to answer questions in powers of ten,” he said. “An example would be, ‘how many hydrogen molecules would it take to build the entire Atlantic Ocean, expressed to the power of ten?’”

That answer’s easy, if you are Ciarra Ortiz ’19. In fact, “Fermi” is her favorite event. Different strokes, and all that.

“I like Fermi because it is all about ‘guesstimation,’” she said. “If you know your basics, like ‘ten to the third is a thousand, ten to the fourth is ten thousand,’ it’s pretty easy to ‘guesstimate’ how many hydrogen molecules you need.”

It’s tough if not downright impossible to train for Science Olympiad, and for some students, that’s the charm. Mandy Xhu ’18 believes that “The Science Olympiad is fun because you cannot



study for it from a book, you have to have practical knowledge.”

It’s that unpredictability that Gabby Pigan ’20 thinks is the secret of her success on the team. The trick, she believes, is to enter each event without having any preconceived notions of how well she will do.

“I went in and found that I knew stuff that I thought I didn’t know,” she said. Her best event this past season was “Thermodynamics,” for which her team had to build a device that would keep water hot, then predict the water temperature over a period of time.

For the team just in its second year, it’s still mainly just about the journey.

“They like it. They’re having fun with it,” Ioannou said. “They’re learning, and we’re not pressuring them. Yes, I want them to succeed. Yes, I would like to see us go to States one day, but honestly, if we just go, and have a good showing, and they meet other people, and they build something that works... That’s what it’s all about.”

Except when it’s not. Thrilled with the large number of underclassmen on the team this year, Ioannou couldn’t help but gush over the prospect of teaching so many Science Olympians next year.

“I have great sophomores coming into my physics class! They are my future engineers!”

Embrace the Process:

Filmmaker Phil Aceto's Kennedy Homecoming by Fred Compton

Kennedy Catholic alumnus Phil Aceto has gone on to pursue a successful and notable career as a screenwriter and filmmaker. He has produced and edited branded documentaries, commercials, music videos, and over 15 seasons of network television series.

He believes that the roots of his work are firmly planted in the lessons learned at Kennedy.

"The art program was eye opening," Aceto told *The Gael*. "I had taken art when I was younger and I already had an appreciation for it. To have the art history studies that Kennedy offered was great. I remember going to college and realizing I already know a lot of this stuff that was being taught. The base has influenced every single thing I've done, even up until now."

That early exposure to fine art and architecture not only influenced Aceto's career choice, but continues to drive what projects he picks. His narrative short, "At Night," a film inspired by Edward Hopper's painting "Night Windows," was an official selection of the Milan International Film Festival, the Slamdance Film Festival, and the Rhode Island International Horror Film Festival.

"I think about architecture when I'm making a film because I think about the structure of the film and what the structure says and what it means," Aceto said. "I remember being in that class and coming



to an idea of, wow, it's not just music or film or a painting, people organize the world to express an idea that is very strong, and the Gothic cathedral was one. I think that was a very sophisticated concept to learn when you're in high school."

After graduating from Kennedy in 1996, Aceto attended SUNY Purchase where he eventually studied film directing. But he spent his freshman year as a visual arts major, propelled by the strength of his portfolio created under the tutelage of Kennedy art teacher Sr. Janet.

"They had looked at my painting and my work and they were 'yup, check, you're in,'" Aceto said. "Her program wasn't just, 'hey I'm going to just let you guys paint and draw pictures' she was, like, 'No, these are specific exercises that you are going to learn.' How to draft with charcoal, then pen and ink, you would use many different aspects of the medium. You're learning the gamut. It was tremendous!"



Filmmaker magazine called Aceto's "At Night" "starkly beautiful and deeply unsettling" and "a marvel of precise camera placement, tracking shots and sound design." The director credits his expertise with the process of art, and the patience needed for creation, in part to his time spent at Kennedy.

"It all comes from hard work, and I go back again to Sr. Janet's class. She instilled in us a strong work ethic and taught us not to hate the process. Things take a long time. Even for your heroes, whether they're a sports figure or an artist, a filmmaker, or a musician. It's about putting in the time and the hard work and at some point you will get it, it will happen for you."

Aceto's current project is the feature film, "The Gloaming." It "explores the confusion, paranoia and unfathomable violence that erupts on the fringes of the American Dream." The film was shot in part on the campus of Kennedy Catholic, and the experience made for a memorable homecoming.

"It was incredible!" Aceto recalled. "My first impression was, every student I met made eye contact. That conveys pure attention, and attention is laced with intention. They were intending on soaking up as much as they could. To see someone that is looking at life with that kind of curiosity... that's a successful person in the making."

Aceto offered some guidance for the aspiring film students who came seeking advice at the feet of the master:

"There are no masters or masterpieces without hard work. Don't hate the process, and every single subject you are studying is going to influence the thing you want to do, no matter what. It's all part of the process of creating 'You' and how you see the world and how you're going to organize the world."



"My first impression was, every student I met made eye contact. That conveys pure attention, and attention is laced with intention. They were intending on soaking up as much as they could."

AUXILIARY GYMNASIUM

Follow along as we lay the groundwork for a new, auxiliary gymnasium which will be located next to the track where the old Booster Hall and garage were located.

Visit our website to learn more: KennedyCatholic.org/AuxGym



Students of Distinction

by Rich Kirby

What is so striking to so many observers, including college recruiters, about the Kennedy Catholic student is not that the school graduates so many great athletes, artists, scholars and future engineers, but that so many students have aptitude in all these areas at once.

Con Edison has been feting one such hyphenate, the scholar-athlete, weekly for over 65 years, and it's come to be a pretty big deal. In January, Con Ed bestowed their award on Kennedy's Vanessa Duarte '18, a point guard on the girls' varsity basketball team and a stand-out in the classroom as well.

Duarte does peer tutoring as a member of the National Honor Society, is manager of the lacrosse team, and is a member of the Polish Club, Italian Club and the Science Olympiad team. She also took four AP courses as well as one of the courses Kennedy offers for college credit. The trick, she says, comes down to basic but not-so-simple time management.

"When you are in school, you have to take advantage of all the free time you have to get school work done, and then use the time you have before and after sports to also focus on academics," Duarte said. "Students have to remember that teachers are there for a reason, and so they should use them all to their advantage and always ask for help. It is hard at



the beginning trying to manage everything, but once you get the right schedule down, it will all be worth it!"

Duarte has received a scholarship from Husson University in Maine to play basketball. While there she will also study criminal justice and psychology.

"Being named the Con Ed scholar-athlete of the week was very exciting and fulfilling," she told *The Gael*. "It showed me that hard work really does pay off and it was great to be recognized for it. It meant a lot that [Kennedy Catholic Director of Admissions] Mr. Bruder nominated me for this award, and believed that I could receive it. It makes me want to keep putting my best work forward and keep trying my best."

We nearly run out of hyphens trying to describe Courtney Manbeck '18. The Cross River native has been on the tennis team since her freshman year, plays clarinet in the pit orchestra for the school musical, and is a member of the Girls Who Code Club. All that along with a stellar GPA caught the attention of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, and Manbeck was named a National Merit Scholarship Finalist.

Nobody gives out scholarships for grace and humility, but if they did, we are pretty sure Manbeck would win one of those as well.

"Kennedy prepared me for this achievement by allowing me to take advanced courses and providing educational resources," Manbeck deflected when asked how she got this far. "The PSAT preparation class in sophomore year especially helped me to score well on the exam. I've had many excellent teachers who have ensured that I performed to the best of my abilities."

Will her best be good enough to get her into MIT, Stanford, Carnegie Mellon or Yale? That's the short list of universities to which she has applied. She hasn't received word yet from their admissions directors as this issue goes to press, but the smart money's on Manbeck.



ANNUAL GIVING

Thanks to the generosity of our alumni, parents, and friends, Kennedy Catholic is growing like no other private Catholic school around. Students arrive each day from as far south as the Bronx and Manhattan, as far north as Wingdale, and as far east and west as Connecticut and Peekskill.

Visit our website at KennedyCatholic.org/Support-Us to learn how you can help provide students with a quality, Catholic education.

Donation	Amount	Donation	Amount	Donation	Amount
Class of 1946 (2 gifts)	\$150	Class of 1979 (1 gift)	\$25	Class of 1999 (1 gift)	\$900
Class of 1949 (2 gifts)	\$150	Class of 1980 (3 gifts)	\$1,600	Class of 2001 (1 gift)	\$250
Class of 1953 (2 gifts)	\$350	Class of 1981 (1 gift)	\$100	Class of 2002 (2 gifts)	\$150
Class of 1955 (1 gift)	\$100	Class of 1982 (16 gifts)	\$3,333	Class of 2009 (1 gift)	\$405
Class of 1957 (4 gifts)	\$5,650	Class of 1983 (7 gifts)	\$1,725	Clergy (4 gifts)	\$1,455
Class of 1961 (4 gifts)	\$481	Class of 1984 (3 gifts)	\$1,315	Faculty (66 gifts)	\$12,715
Class of 1963 (1 gift)	\$50	Class of 1985 (6 gifts)	\$1,281	Family other Than Parent (10 gifts)	\$3,670
Class of 1964 (1 gift)	\$1,000	Class of 1986 (6 gifts)	\$1,420	HH (16 gifts)	\$26,931
Class of 1967 (1 gift)	\$250	Class of 1987 (9 gifts)	\$3,395	Other (48 gifts)	\$30,627
Class of 1968 (8 gifts)	\$1,325	Class of 1988 (6 gifts)	\$685	Parent (791 gifts)	\$88,696
Class of 1969 (3 gifts)	\$8,600	Class of 1989 (4 gifts)	\$350	Past Parent (69 gifts)	\$16,651
Class of 1970 (1 gift)	\$100	Class of 1990 (1 gift)	\$143	Individual Students (22 gifts)	\$416
Class of 1971 (5 gifts)	\$1,325	Class of 1991 (1 gift)	\$100	Student Body (6 gifts)	\$8,945
Class of 1972 (6 gifts)	\$1,976	Class of 1992 (1 gift)	\$900	Vendor (42 gifts)	\$18,642
Class of 1973 (12 gifts)	\$2,335	Class of 1993 (3 gifts)	\$181	-----	
Class of 1974 (6 gifts)	\$925	Class of 1994 (10 gifts)	\$1,292	Grand Totals (1,240 gifts)	\$311,082
Class of 1975 (3 gifts)	\$175	Class of 1995 (1 gift)	\$50	-----	
Class of 1976 (5 gifts)	\$50,195	Class of 1996 (3 gifts)	\$6,025	Gift In Memory/Honor	\$1,845
Class of 1977 (4 gifts)	\$480	Class of 1997 (1 gift)	\$225	-----	
Class of 1978 (4 gifts)	\$500	Class of 1998 (3 gifts)	\$370	In-Kind Gifts	\$58,273

2018 Summer Clinic

Are you looking for a Summer Clinic for your 7th, 8th, or incoming Class of 2022 Kennedy Catholic Student? Kennedy has two options:

Mind * Body * Spirit

When: June 25-29 from 8:30a – 1:30p

Workshop Philosophy: Join us the week of June 25th on the campus of Kennedy Catholic and get a head start in developing your Mind, Body and Spirit.

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 hosted by 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.

SPORTS CLINICS

Week of June 25:

- * Football - 5:00p – 8:00p
- * Varsity Head Coach Dom Tassone

Week of July 9:

- * Girls Volleyball - 8:30a – 11:30a
- * Varsity Head Coach Tony Santora

Week of July 16:

- * Girls Softball - 8:30a – 11:30a
- * Varsity Head Coach Chris A'Hearn
- * Boys Lacrosse - 8:30a -11:30a
- * Varsity Head Coach Vin Savistano

Week of July 23:

- * Boys Baseball - 8:30a -11:30a
- * Coach Anthony Corona – member of Kennedy's 2008 NYS Championship Team and current NY Mets Minor League Scout
- * B & G Soccer - 8:30a -11:30a
- * Varsity Head Coach Matt Tieber

Week of July 30-August 3:

- * B & G Basketball - 5:00p-8:00p
- * Varsity Coach Len Yearwood

Learn more on our website:
KennedyCatholic.org/Summer



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Parents of Alumni:

If your son or daughter no longer maintains permanent residence at your home, please notify the Alumni Office of his/her new mailing address at (914) 232- 5061 x 110 or Alumni@KennedyCatholic.org

SAVE THE DATE

Kennedy Catholic President's Dinner
Thursday, May 24, 6:00PM

Honoring:

NYS Sen. Terrence Murphy
Sally Cartaya & Annette Di Grandi
Richard J. Davin
Class of '18 Students of Excellence
Teacher of the Year

Kennedy Catholic Graduation
Saturday, June 2, 11:00AM

***Guests By Invitation**

Annual All-Class Alumni Reunion
Saturday, June 23, 6:00PM

***Guests By Invitation**

Annual Golf Classic
Fall 2018, Date TBA
New Location, TBA



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KennedyCatholic.org

