



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

LIFETIME LIONS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

July 2015

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear St. Mark Alumni,

While the school year has officially ended, we at St. Mark are already busy preparing for next year. We have so many new programs in the works that we look forward to sharing with all of you.

Our student iPads have arrived, and our teachers are excited to incorporate them into the school day beginning in the fall. Our students just might be a little bit excited too....!

Engineering and Computer Coding clubs will be added to our extra-curricular line-up, an Orchestra program is coming on board, we're developing a school garden, we've added more student performances through our growing Fine Arts Program, STEM-related* curriculum is enhancing our academics, and we're working with the area Catholic high schools on programs that will bring together our alumni and our current students in a truly meaningful way. We hope you're inspired to share your talents with our students in these areas and more. Stay tuned for more details!



**A NATIONAL SCHOOL
OF EXCELLENCE**

St. Mark Catholic School is a two time recipient of the U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon Award, and has been nominated to apply for a rare third award in 2015. This means that St. Mark students consistently score in the top 15% in the nation on standardized tests.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

I'd also like to take a moment to congratulate all of you who just graduated from high school. You are entering a new phase of your life, and we hope you will continue to share your adventures and successes with us as you head off to college and beyond.

Speaking of high school, we have plenty of 2015 high school graduate accomplishments to share in this "expanded edition" of the alumni newsletter, in addition to our regular alumni news. So, sit back and enjoy reading about your fellow St. Mark graduates, and know that you are a part of something great. St. Mark's success truly comes to life through our alumni, as evidenced by this impressive list of accomplishments.

As we look forward to the 2015-16 school year, we hope you will be thinking of ways that you might want to be involved at your alma mater. Please contact me directly if you'd like to come back and mentor our students during the upcoming school year. Our alumni are always welcome at St. Mark.

Enjoy the remaining days of summer!

Sincerely,

Patricia Opon, Principal
patricia.opon@stmcs.net

ALUMNI UPDATES

JPII Awards: Congratulations to **Mary H.** (2011) who received the John Paul II High School Bishop Grahmann Award. This award recognizes a student who

Follow us and stay connected!



HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL!

Do you know anyone interested in a Catholic education for their child? St. Mark has limited openings for the 2015-16 school year. [Click here](#) for more details.

CALLING ALL ALUMNI - JOIN LIFETIME LIONS!

St. Mark alumni are invited to join Lifetime Lions, our official alumni network. Keep up with former classmates, become a mentor to current students, and learn about opportunities to earn service hours. Click [here](#) to register.

LION'S DEN SPIRIT STORE

Get the gear! Brand new St. Mark logo merchandise and spirit wear are available in our Lion's Den Spirit Store. Order your St. Mark gear [online](#) anytime!

AROUND CAMPUS

exemplifies the John Paul II mission statement. Mary is the third St. Mark alum to receive this award during the 2014-15 school year. In addition, congratulations to **Kelly S.** (2011) who received the John Paul II Cardinal Women's Auxiliary Scholarship which recognizes a senior with an exceptional record of service.

Art Installation: Nick M., son of 4th grade teacher, Helene M., as well as a 2005 St. Mark graduate and 2009 Jesuit graduate, just received his Masters Degree in landscape architecture from Kansas State University. His masters report, A Framework for Site Informed Light Art Installations, involved the design and build of multiple prototypes. After a series of prototypes, the sunflower design moved into further design development. As a result, the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation expressed interest in the light art installation and commissioned his work for a pop-up park that is being implemented in the downtown section of the city. It will be made of steel and will weigh approximately 3,600 pounds. Click below to see a video of the prototype.

St. Mark takes 2nd in

Spelling Bee: St. Mark 7th grade student, Sarah H., won second place in the Dallas County Private Schools Spelling Bee.

St. Mark Dominates Robotics Competition!

Our St. Mark students competed in the annual Dallas Diocese Robotics Competition held at St. Monica and brought home some serious hardware. In the Arena Division: Out of 27 teams, St. Mark won 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places, and one Honorable Mention. In the Invention Division: St. Mark won 1st place and two Honorable Mentions.

National Quiz Bowl

Championship: St. Mark's Quiz Bowl team received 29th place from a total of 128 teams from all over the United States.

Math Fax Awards: St. Mark did very well at this year's Math Fax competition. Two students earned National Math Fax awards: Antonio M. won Math 7 National 1st Place, and Sean W. won Math 4 National 4th Place.

Diocesan "Best Book" Contest

Winner: St. Mark student, Marie D., took first place in the 4th/5th grade division at the Diocesan "Best Book I Read This Year" contest.



Alumnus Nick M., Public Art Prototype

Honorary Senate Pages: Congratulations to alumna **Emily W.**, and brother, CJ, who recently served as State Senate Honorary Pages for the day at the State Capitol.



Alums Earn Boy Scout Awards:

Congratulations to 2011 alumni and recent Bishop Lynch grads, **Kyle D.**, **Sam W.**, and **Joseph G.**, who earned their Eagle Scout ranks. St. Mark directly benefitted from Joseph's Eagle Scout project, which was the landscaping of the parking space area in the school's front circle.

Congratulations are also in order for Class of 2014 alumni and rising sophomores at John Paul II High School **Kyle S.**, **Will O.**, **Kolbe B.**, and **Jason B.**, along with Class of 2012

St. Mark Receives 37th Work of Heart Award: Congratulations to Athletic Director, Marlene Ehring, who recently received the Work of Heart Award!. Presented by the Catholic Foundation, Work of Heart awards honor those who "go the extra mile" in serving our educational community. This is the 37th time a St. Mark staffer has earned this award since its inception in 2005. For more information about the Work of Heart award, please visit the [Work of Heart web page](#).

Biblical Manuscript/Artwork Presented to St. Mark: The Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts is an organization that travels the world taking high resolution photographs of New Testament manuscripts. Steve and Maggie Carson have supported this organization for a number of years. Through the Carson's affiliation, the CSNTM arranged for two of these images to come to St. Mark. The first, a photograph of an illustration of St. John, was presented to the school by the CSNTM. The second, a photograph of the oldest of St. Paul's manuscripts, was presented to the school by Ms. Steinkirchner's third grade class.

alumnus and rising John Paul II senior, Joseph Bondi. They recently earned their Boy Scout Ad Altare Dei Medals. This award is given to scouts who dedicate themselves to learning about the church's seven sacraments and live them through service to the community.

Alum Receives Catholic Foundation's Scholar Award AND Performs in *Beauty and the Beast*: **Maria R.**, Class of 2012 alumna and rising senior at The Highlands School, was recently presented with the 2015 Catholic Foundation Scholar Award. [Click here](#) to read her article about what a Catholic education means to her, as it appeared in the 2/20/15 issue of *The Texas Catholic*. She also played "Cogsworth" in a recent performance of *Beauty and the Beast* at the Irving Arts Centre presented by The Highlands School. Bravo!

Alums Have Rugby Success: The Jesuit Rugby team won the Rugby Texas Plate Division State Championship. Several St. Mark alumni from 2011, 2012 and 2013 were on the team, and a few other former students were at the game to support the team. From left to right: **Alex R.**, **Chandler P.** (player), **Roman K.** (player), **Bill N.** (player), **Felix K.**, **Chris M.** (player), and **Christian S.** (player).



Alums Receive World Languages and Academic Awards at Ursuline Ceremonies:

These pieces will be displayed in a prominent place in the main school building for everyone to enjoy.



Father Cliff Expands St. Mark Fine Arts Program: This year's middle school "Spring Musical" elective presented "Alice in Wonderland." Father Cliff himself directed the production and played a hands-on role with costume and set design. Music teacher, Patty Corsi, provided musical direction. For the first time, admission was charged for the evening performance. By all measures, the production was a huge success. Father Cliff plans to build upon that success by adding a second middle school Elizabethan performance, and St. Mark is also adding a fourth grade performance to the 2015-16 line-up.



Several St. Mark students were honored at the 2014-15 Ursuline Academy World Languages Awards and Freshman/Sophomore Academic Awards ceremonies. For their scores on the National Spanish Exam, **Kathryn P.** (2012), **Emily V.** (2013) and **Celine M.** (2014) each received silver medals. For their scores on the HSK Chinese Proficiency Test, **Caroline D.** (2013) and **Hannah K.** (2013) both received medals. For her score on the Le Grand Concours National French Test, **Elizabeth R.** (2014) received a silver medal. She also recently won second place for Memorized Prose at the "Fete Francaise" academic competition held among area public and private high schools.

Freshman/Sophomore Academic Awards were presented to: **Cassandra F.** (2013) for Creative Writing; **Hannah K.** (2013) for American Mathematics Competition (AMC) 10 School Top 3 Scorer & Team Member; **Ivanka P.** (2014) for Freshman Choir, AMC 10 School Top 3 Scorer & Team Member, and Chinese I; **Emily V.** (2013) for Chemistry I Honors; and **Valeria M.** (2014) for Revelation in Scripture.

Alum Receives Bishop Lynch Math Honors: Congratulations to recent Bishop Lynch graduate, **Amanda E.** (2011), who was recently honored with the following math awards: Third place in the BL Continental Math League Calculus Contest; first place BL and 29th in State in Texas Math League; second place BL Calculus Log 1; and fifth place BL American Scholastic Math Association, Senior Division.

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Parish Fall Festival: It is time to begin planning the 2015 Parish Fall Festival & Raffle. Help is needed in all areas including: Graphics, Solicitations, Raffle, Food, Games, Entertainment, Volunteers, Safe Environment, and Set-Up. All alumni are welcome to participate and high school service hours are available.

Event Date: October 31, 2015

Please contact [Claudine Humphries](#) for more information, or visit the [Parish Fall Festival Facebook page](#).

2011 ALUMNI GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL WITH MANY ACCOLADES

In case you missed the posts on our Facebook page earlier this summer, following is a list of our 2011 alumni who graduated from our area Catholic high schools with special honors and awards.

Of special note:

Emily P. was named the 2015 Valedictorian of Ursuline Academy of Dallas.

Grads Succeed on Jesuit Crew: The Jesuit Crew team competed in the Stotesbury Cup Regatta in Philadelphia in May. Stotesbury is the oldest and largest national high school crew competition. Jesuit's "freshman eight" boat, including alumnus **Colin J.** (2014), posted the fastest time during the semi-finals race, and placed fifth overall out of thirty-nine competitors from across the nation. The "senior eight" boat, including alumnus and team captain **Conar E.** (2011), placed fourth overall out of thirty-six teams.

Conar E. was also presented with the 2015 Jesuit "Ranger Heart Award," which is given to an athlete who exemplifies Jesuit's motto, "Men For Others." This is the second time Conar has received this award. In addition, he received the Jesuit Crew "Captain's Award" for his leadership role this school year.

Former Student Receives Congressional Art Competition Honor: Congratulations to St. Mark Class of 2012 alumna and rising senior at John Paul II High School, **Abby M.**, who received an Honorable Mention in the 2015 Congressional Art Competition through Congressman Sam Johnson's office.

Alum Participates in Beijing Delegation: **Madison S.**, St. Mark Class of 2011 and recent graduate of Ursuline Academy, recently participated in Ursuline's delegation trip to Beijing, China. She chronicled her journey, which was featured in an edition of *The Texas Catholic* newspaper. [Click here](#) to read about her adventure.

Amanda E. was named the 2015 Salutatorian of Bishop Lynch High School.

Congratulations to these exceptional students!

Bishop Lynch High School:

Morgan B. - Honorable Mention/ Environmental Science Award

Luke C. - Top 10%; Honorable Mention-Linear Algebra Award/Psychology Award/Physics Award

Han D. - Academic Top Quarter

Angelica D. - Honorable Mention-Choir Award

Amanda E. - Class of 2015 Salutatorian; Top 10%; Linear Algebra Award; Honorable Mention/Physics Award

Joseph G. - John Adamcik Memorial Scholarship Award; Student Leadership Award

Johnathan G. - Business Education Award

Aubrey G. - Academic Top Quarter; Astronomy Award; Latin Award

BL Inducts Alumni Into NHS: Several St. Mark alums were recently inducted into the Bishop Lynch High School chapter of the National Honor Society: **Casey B.** (Class of 2013), **Kelly K.** (Class of 2012), **Kristen L.** (Class of 2013), **Brianna T.** (Class of 2013), **Trey T.** (Class of 2013), and **Emma W.** (Class of 2013). Congratulations to all!

Alums Win at Drill Team Nationals: The John Paul II High School Cardinal Belles drill team was recently in Galveston competing in a national drill team competition. They did very well and brought many titles back to JP II including first place for Team Jazz, first place for Team Lyrical, first place for Team Pom, and second place for Team Novelty. St. Mark alumni members are **Caroline G.** (Class of 2014), **Mary W.** (Class of 2013), **Lacey L.** (Class of 2012), and **Audrey E.** (Class of 2012).

Former St. Mark Student Accepted to Prestigious Graduate Program: Congratulations to **Kayla E.** (Class of 2006), who was recently accepted to the Forensic Science graduate program at Sam Houston University. The program is ranked eighth in the nation and is extremely competitive and prestigious. Only seven students are accepted per year on an international basis.

Alums Featured at Jesuit's College Signing Day: **Conar E.** (Class of 2011), recently attended Jesuit's college signing day/press conference as a member of Jesuit Crew. He has accepted an offer to row for the University of Delaware. He will be rowing against Harvard, Cornell, Georgetown, University of Pennsylvania and Princeton (he declined offers from a couple

Samuel W. - Band Award;
Honorable Mention-Student
Leadership Award

Jesuit College Preparatory
School:

Conar E. - National Honors
Society

Alexander E. - Cum Laude;
National Honors Society

Evan L. - Magna Cum Laude;
National Honors Society

Bill N. - National Honors Society

Andrew S. - Cum Laude;
National Honors Society

Chris S. - Magna Cum Laude;
Honors Graduate (95% or
higher); National Honors
Society

Ursuline Academy of Dallas:

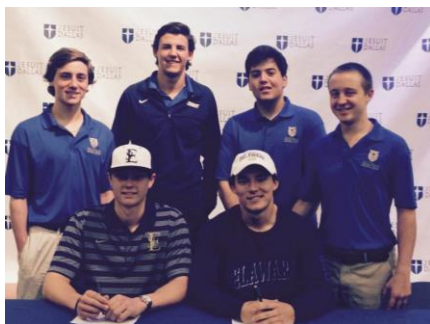
Jessica B. - Summa Cum Laude;
National Honors Society;
National Merit Commended

Jordan E. - Cum Laude

Emily P. - Class of 2015
Valedictorian; Summa Cum
Laude; National Honors Society

Elizabeth N. - Magna Cum
Laude; National Honors Society;
National Merit Commended

of those schools to row for the University of Delaware coach). **Zachary S.** (Class of 2011) also attended Jesuit's college signing day/press conference as a member of the Jesuit Baseball team. He will be playing for St. Edward's University. Conar and Zack were supported at the signing ceremony by fellow Jesuit classmates who are also St. Mark Class of 2011 alums.



Photo, left to right: Standing - **Andrew S.**, **Matthew H.**, **Alexander E.**, **Parker T.**; Sitting-**Zachary S.**, **Conar E.**

Alumni Succeed on JP II Academic

Octathlon Team: The JP II Academic Octathlon team recently competed at the Region III Competition at Heritage High School in Frisco. The team placed third overall out of 27 teams and placed first in the Super Quiz event. Alumni team members are: **Dylan C.** (2014), **Will O.** (2014), and **Kyle S.** (2014).

Alumni Inducted Into the Ursuline Academy Chapter of the National Honor Society: Congratulations to St. Mark Class of 2013 alumni and rising juniors at Ursuline Academy, **Emily A.**, **Caroline D.**, **Jennifer D.**, **Hannah K.**, **Emily V.** and **Isabelle V.**, who were all recently inducted into the National Honor Society.

Alumnus Named Jesuit "Ranger of the Week": Congratulations to **Chris S.**, St. Mark

Jung P. - Summa Cum Laude;
National Honors Society

Madison S. - Summa Cum Laude;
National Honors Society;
National Merit Finalist

Madeleine W. - Cum Laude;
National Merit Commended

Nicole W. - Cum Laude

John Paul II High School:

Matthew A. - Honor Graduate;
Cardinal Scholar; National
Honor Society

Martin A. - Honor Graduate;
Cardinal Scholar; National
Honor Society

Fernanda B. - 2015 Bishop
Grahmann Award Recipient

Samuel B. - Honor Graduate;
Cardinal Scholar; National
Honor Society

Leah D. - Honor Graduate;
Cardinal Scholar; National
Honor Society

Mary H. - Honor Graduate;
Cardinal Scholar; National
Honor Society; 2015 Bishop
Grahmann Award Recipient

Class of 2011, who was recently named Jesuit's "Ranger of the Week" for his outstanding performance on their lacrosse team. [Click here](#) to read more.

Congratulations to alumna **Kathryn P.**, Class of 2012 and rising senior at Ursuline Academy, who will be one of 180 participants at Camp LEAD, a senior leadership and development program for top students who demonstrate leadership potential. The program takes place at Texas Tech University.

St. Mark Alumni Chosen for Diocesan Mission Trip to Nicaragua: Each year, the Diocese of Dallas sponsors a student summer mission trip. Fifty students from five area Catholic high schools are chosen to participate. Students must submit applications in order to be considered, and are chosen based on their academic standing, letters of recommendation, and personal interviews. This year's trip took place June 10-19. Students traveled to Nicaragua to assist communities in need with construction projects, and to engage in fellowship with the youth of the parishes they serve. Among the fifty students chosen, several were St. Mark Catholic School alumni: **Sarah C., Abby M., Sean R., and Abbie V.** from John Paul II High School; and from Ursuline Academy of Dallas, **Hannah K.** and **Elizabeth L.** We are so proud of these students for continuing to carry out their Catholic mission of service to others.

Congratulations to St. Mark alumna, **Heather S.** (1998), daughter of Kindergarten teacher, Sharon Thompson, who successfully completed her defense to obtain a PhD in

Megan M. - Honor Graduate; Cardinal Scholar; National Honor Society

Patrick M. - Honor Graduate; Cardinal Scholar; National Honor Society; National Merit Commended Scholar; 2015 Bishop Grahmann Award Recipient

Kaitlyn R. - Honor Graduate; Cardinal Scholar; National Honor Society; National Merit Commended Scholar

Jacob R. - Cardinal Scholar

Kelly S. - Honor Graduate; Cardinal Scholar; National Honor Society

The majority of our St. Mark alumni also received numerous academic, athletic, and/or service awards from their high schools, and the list of college scholarships that they earned (too many to mention), is quite impressive.

We are so proud of ALL of our St. Mark 2011 alumni, and are honored to have played a part in establishing a solid foundation upon which to build.

Congratulations to the Class of 2015!

LIONS MENTOR LIONS

Neuroscience. She will continue on in medical school and will begin clinical rotations in August.

ONCE A LION, ALWAYS A LION

So many of our alumni have remained friends after leaving our halls. Check out the 2015 JPll grads shown below, all 2011 graduates of St. Mark. From the top row, left to right: **Martin A., Matt A., Sam B., Matt V., Jacob R., Patrick M., Mary H., Leah D., Megan M., Claire F., Fernanda B.,** and **Sophia R.**



Prayer Partners For Life: Alumni **Elizabeth H.** (Class of 2009) and **Elaine T.** (Class of 2003) were Prayer Partners during their years at St. Mark. Twelve years after this photo was taken, they both found themselves volunteering with the parish's Youth Ministry program and were thrilled to reconnect with each other!

Alumnus and U.S. Olympic Karate Team Captain Conducts Anti-Bullying Assembly: Tom S.

(Class of 2004) paid a visit to our 5th-8th graders last semester to discuss anti-bullying tactics. Tom is a graduate of St. Mark, Jesuit, and TCU, and received his master's degree from UTD. He is also Team Captain of the U.S. Olympic Karate Team, and it is his background as an athlete that he utilized to relate to our students. He discussed ways to develop a good "offense" and "defense," and challenged students to use the remaining weeks of Lent to do good deeds and diffuse potentially negative situations. Afterwards, he signed autographs, and the students passed around his most recent gold medal from the Pan American Games in Toronto, Canada.



Grad Does Field Work at St. Mark: **Hannah M.** (Class of 2012), was recently back in our halls. Now a rising senior at



FAVORITE ST. MARK MEMORY

When registering for "Lifetime Lions," you are asked to share your favorite St. Mark memories. Bianca C. (2012) recalls how much fun it was to participate in St. Mark's theater productions. Now, even more of our students will build similar memories, thanks to the expansion of our Fine Arts program.

STAY CONNECTED

Keep us posted! As we receive alumni updates, we incorporate them into our social media posts, weekly school bulletins, and alumni communications. Tell us about your recent activities and accomplishments -- we'd love to hear from you! Need to update your contact information? Simply contact debbie.reed@stmcs.net with all of your updates.

Plano Senior High School, she participated in their "Education and Training" program, and we are thrilled that she chose to do her field work at St. Mark. Hannah assisted in Ms. Steinkirchner's third grade classroom throughout the school year.



Grad Comes Back to Help With Musical: A big thank you to Cori G. (2008), who recently came back to lend her talents to our students by assisting with the middle school "Spring Musical" elective, *Alice In Wonderland*.

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"ONCE A LION, ALWAYS A LION!"

St. Mark Catholic School | 1201 Alma Drive, Plano, TX 75075
www.stmcs.net | (972) 578-0610

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