



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

LIFETIME LIONS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

March 2016

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear St. Mark Alumni and Parents of Alumni,

Spring has nearly sprung, and at St. Mark, we're looking forward to our final months of school with traditions old and new.

Before I get to that, I want to acknowledge all of the alumni who have stopped by recently for a visit, or have participated in St. Mark events and activities. We've seen so many familiar faces in our halls as of late, like **Andrew P. '10**, who is currently a sophomore at The University of Notre Dame. He is pictured here with his brother, 6th grader Jack.

(photo removed)

Whether it's bringing lunch to a younger sibling, or simply stopping by to see your class composite, we love your visits. We even had impressive alumni representation at our "Sweethearts Gala & Auction" in February. Former students and families took part in the fun and fundraising for our school. It all goes to show that you consider St. Mark a second home.



**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.**

**This means that
St. Mark students
consistently score in the
top 15% in the nation on
standardized tests.**

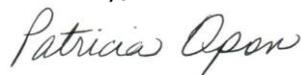
[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

Speaking of home, be sure to check out the school's new marketing video entitled, "[Welcome Home to St. Mark.](#)" It was produced by our middle school Video Production elective and we think you'll agree that it truly shows why St. Mark is our home.

We have so many wonderful activities coming up in the next few months, and we'd love for you to be a part of them. For example, our very first S.T.E.M. Fair takes place April 8. Our own **Allison N. '14** is serving as a Co-Chair of this event that will feature more than 40 booths including Texas Instruments, Microsoft, Apple, Raytheon, The University of Texas at Dallas, various high school clubs that engage in science, technology, engineering or math, and much more. Our annual spring musical is unique this year, in that Father Cliff wrote the script himself. *Joseph the Dreamer* will be performed by our students on May 11. Come for the show, or lend your talents to the production, like **Cori Gaskey '08** did for last year's production!

If you'd like to take part in any of our events in any way, big or small, please don't hesitate to contact us. Alumni are so important to St. Mark, and we can't thank you enough for your continued support of your alma mater. It's a huge part of what makes St. Mark our home.

Sincerely,



Patricia Opon, Principal
patricia.opon@stmcs.net

ALUMNI UPDATES

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 2016-17 school year. [Click here](#) for more details.



Early Childhood Open House

Wednesday, April 27, 2016

4:30 - 6:30 PM

Early Childhood Education
Bldg.

Pre-registration is available at
www.stmcs.net/open-house-registration.



St. Mark alumni are invited to join Lifetime Lions, our official

Alums Impress at Speech/Debate: Ivanka P. and Valeria M. (Class of 2014) are members of the Ursuline Academy Speech/Debate team. They've both recently posted some impressive results. Ivanka placed sixth in Original Oratory at the Lovejoy High School Tournament, and was a semi-finalist in the same category at the Plano West High School Tournament. At the Creekview High School Tournament, Ivanka placed sixth in Impromptu Speaking, and Valeria qualified as a semi-finalist in the same category. [Click here](#) for more.

Alums Combine Service and Fun at Ursuline Academy: Alumni Samantha B. '13 and Elizabeth R. '14 are both heading up student organizations at Ursuline Academy. Samantha is the current Co-President of the *Refugee Awareness Club* which promotes awareness for refugees in Dallas through reading circles, carnivals, and fundraisers. Learn more [here](#). Elizabeth started the *Bears from Bears Club* this year with the mission of conducting teddy bear drives benefitting children at area hospitals and advocacy centers, and organizing community service projects at those organizations. Learn more [here](#).

Music to our Ears: Congratulations to Uyen L. '14 who was recently inducted into the Ursuline Academy of Dallas chapter of the Tri M Music Honor Society, an international music honor organization that recognizes students for their academic and musical achievements.

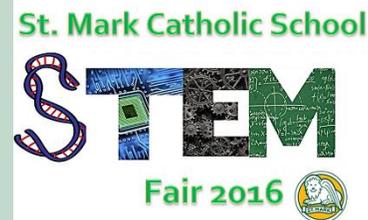
Alums Participate in Theater Production: A few of our 2014 graduates showcased their talents in the recent Ursuline Academy of Dallas production of *Annie Get Your Gun*. **Celine M.** and **Uyen L.** were both members of

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.

LIIONS DEN

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!

YOU'RE INVITED!



Join us on April 8 at 5:00 PM on the St. Mark campus for the first annual St. Mark S.T.E.M. Fair featuring companies such as Microsoft, Texas Instruments, Apple, and Raytheon, as well as student groups from area high school clubs specializing in S.T.E.M. We'll have food and entertainment on hand, so plan to make an evening of it and take advantage of the great information and interactive displays along with our students.

the vocal ensemble, while **Valeria M.** served as Prop Master for the production.

Congratulations to **Emily P.**, a 2011 graduate of St. Mark and 2015 graduate of Ursuline Academy, who has been named to the Dean's List in The University of Notre Dame's First Year of Studies for outstanding scholarship during the Fall 2015 semester. Students who achieve Dean's List honors at Notre Dame represent the top 30% of students in their college.

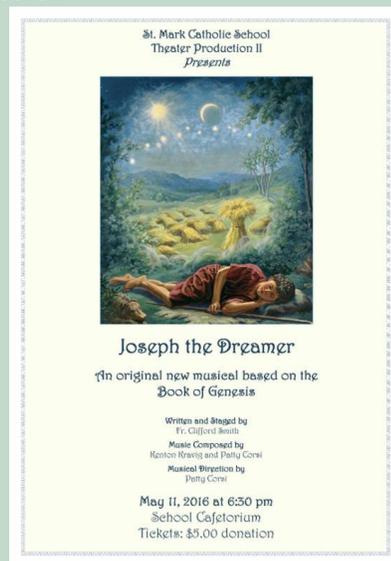
Grads Commit to College Sports on National Signing Day! Congratulations to **Tristan S. '12**, current senior at Bishop Lynch High School, who committed to play football at Illinois State University, and to **Ryan M. '12**, current senior at John Paul II High School, who committed to play soccer at The Colorado School of Mines. Former St. Mark student, **Gabe B.**, current senior at Bishop Lynch High School, committed to play football at St. Joseph's College in Indiana.

JPII Academic Decathlon Success: Eric N. '12 and Dylan C. '14 are both members of the John Paul II High School Academic Decathlon team. They competed in a recent regional competition where the team performed very well and won First Place Overall Team, and also placed first in the Super Quiz event. The team also competed at regionals where Dylan won first place in the scholastic division, and in the state competition where Dylan won second place in the scholastic division. Dylan is the only sophomore at JPII to make the team.

St. Mark Alums Selected for Diocesan Mission Trip: Each year, the Diocese of Dallas sponsors a student summer mission trip

Monsignor Smyth Golf Tournament: Due to unforeseen conflicts, we will not hold a golf tournament this spring. Stay tuned for more information about the next tournament scheduled for spring 2017, coordinated by our alumni!

Spring Musical: Join us on Wednesday, May 11 at 6:30 PM in the Cafetorium for Father Cliff's original production entitled *Joseph The Dreamer*, a humorous version of the Genesis story about Joseph and his brothers. Our middle school Theater Production II class serves as the cast, with original music by St. Mark's own Kenton Kravig and Patty Corsi.



LIONS MENTOR LIONS

outside the U.S. Fifty students from five area Catholic high schools are chosen to represent their respective schools. Students must submit applications in order to be considered, and are chosen based on various criteria including their academic standing, leadership, letters of recommendation, and personal interviews. Students assist communities in need with construction projects, and engage in fellowship with the youth of the parishes they serve. Among the students chosen for 2016, several are St. Mark alumni: **Andrew B. '13** from John Paul II High School; **Emily A. '13**, **Caroline D. '13** and **Elizabeth R. '14** from Ursuline Academy of Dallas, and **Brooke H. '13** from Bishop Lynch High School. We are so proud of these students for continuing to carry out their Catholic mission of service to others.

Two Alums Earn Debate Honors: Two members of the Jesuit College Prep Debate Team received honors at the recent Colleyville Heritage Invitational tournament. **Patrick B. '12**, current senior, and his team partner, earned third place honors out of more than 60 teams. In the novice division, **Ethan J. '15**, current freshman, and his team partner, went a flawless 8-0 on the day, including a sweep over two teams from Greenhill in the semifinals and finals en route to first place. It was the first tournament of the year won by a freshman debate team. Ethan will join a handful of others who advance to the National Debate Tournament in Atlanta in late March. **Patrick B. '12**, along with his varsity debate team partner, received third place overall at the recent 2016 Texas Forensic Association Debate Championship in Pflugerville, TX, and also received All-State recognition at the state debate tournament.

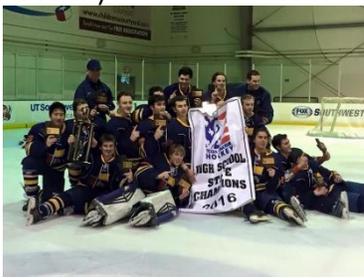
Allison N. '14, current sophomore at John Paul II High School, is serving as a Co-Chair of the first annual St. Mark Catholic School S.T.E.M. Fair.

AROUND CAMPUS

Annual Auction: The 29th annual St. Mark dinner and auction was a huge success! Dubbed the "Sweetheart's Gala & Auction," it raised more than \$100,000 for the St. Mark Athletics Department for gym and playground enhancements. Hundreds of school and alumni families and friends gathered for an evening full of fun and fellowship, and of course, frenzied bidding on some great auction packages. During the evening, we took a moment to acknowledge those families who have their last child graduating 8th grade this year. And speaking of the last child graduating, a special shout out to the family of **Kevin and Carol Ann Gaskey** -- they have continuously had a child at St. Mark for 26 years! We appreciate all of the support from our wonderful community -- our students will soon reap the benefits!

Alums Perform in John Paul II High School Musicals: **Mitchell J. '15** has landed the role of Donkey in *Shrek the Musical* at John Paul II High School. Performances take place April 1 and 2 at 7:30 PM, and April 3 at 3:00 PM. **Amanda L. '14** is performing in JP II's rendition of *The Jungle Book*, which was recently presented to our St. Mark students!

Hockey Champs: Kudos to **Jake K. '12**, **Nate K. '14** and **Joey M. '14** who are members of the John Paul II High School hockey team. They recently won their first state championship!

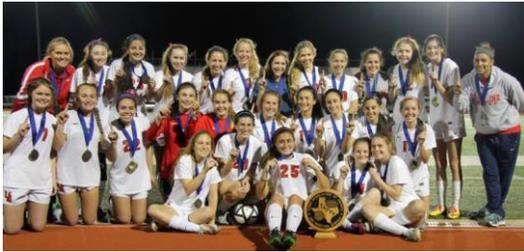


Soccer Stars: Congratulations to the Ursuline Academy of Dallas JV Soccer Team that won their 5A Tapps Division Championship against Nolan Catholic High School and Bishop Lynch High School. They took overall and won the bracket. **Savannah H. '15** and **Shannon R. '15** are both members of the team.

Casey B. '13 is a member of the Ursuline Academy of Dallas Varsity soccer team that won the 2016 TAPPS Girls State Soccer Championship. In 2015, the team broke their 24 year winning streak when they lost the championship to rival Bishop Lynch High School, but this year, they took it back!



Catholic Schools Week: The annual national celebration of Catholic schools in the United States took place in early February. St. Mark showed appreciation for specific members of our community each day that week from our pastor, to our families, to our students, our teachers, our volunteers and our parish community. Free dress days, family lunch day, the student art show, ice cream at lunch, teacher switch day, the spring pep rally, the International Tasting Faire, and the 8th grade vs. the faculty volleyball



JPII Superlative Awards: John Paul II High School announced their Superlative Award winners, and several St. Mark alums are on the list. Congratulations to **Scott J. '12** - Outstanding Cardinal; **Sarah C. '12** - Most School Spirit; **Jennifer Y. '12** - Wittiest Senior Girl; **Courtney J. '12** - Best Christian Attitude Senior; **Carter P. '14** - Most Athletic Sophomore Boy; **Amber R. '14** - Most Athletic Sophomore Girl; **Reed W. '14** - Friendliest Sophomore Boy; **Caroline G. '14** - Sophomore Class Favorite

Ursuline Coding Competitors: Three St. Mark alumni recently excelled at the Digital Diva Programming Competition at Plano East Senior High School as students of Ursuline Academy of Dallas. **Emily V. '13**, **Valeria M. '14**, and **Ivanka P. '14** competed in the all-girls competition which helps grow female interest in a male-dominated field. Competitors solved a set of problems with code. Valeria and Ivanka also recently participated at the Computer Science CodeWars Competition at Plano West High School.

Hannah K. '13, junior at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, was recently selected to the Texas Private School Music Educators All-Region Orchestra.

Ivanka P. '14, sophomore at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, recently earned superior ratings at

game (the faculty won!) were all part of the fun. The Class of 2015 was on hand for their portrait unveiling, as it took its place in the main hallway. Does any of this look familiar to you....?

(photos removed)



6th Grade Girls and 7th Grade Boys DPL Basketball Champs!

Our 6th Grade Girls D2 Gold and 7th grade boys D2 basketball teams both won their 2016 DPL Championship games! GO LIONS!

Students Succeed at Academic Contests: The St. Mark **Quiz Bowl** team placed second out of 18 teams in a recent Texas Quiz Bowl Alliance tournament held at Greenhill School. The final round was very close. In the end, our Lions were narrowly bested by St. Mark's School of Texas. It was truly an exciting day! 8th grader, Antonio M., was also the top scorer for the competition, placing 1st out of 74 competitors. His score exceeded the second place contestant by more than 300!

the TPSMEA Regional Solo and Ensemble Competition at Legacy Christian Academy.

Young Men's Service League: We are proud of the fact that many of our graduates and their mothers have participated in this organization for years. Their goal is to encourage young men to pursue philanthropic involvement in their community and to provide an opportunity to enhance mother/son relationships. The following St. Mark alumni mothers and their high school age sons currently participate. The boys attend several different high schools. Together, they are required to complete a certain number of service hours each year.

Nichole A. (Daniel '14)
Mary B. (Jason '14/Joseph '12)
Sylvia C. (Dylan '14)
Marina D. (Rafael '12/Kristian '15)
Dana G. (Worth '15)
Odette I. (Alec '14)
Lynette J. (Ethan '15)
Victoria J. (Mitchell '15/Nate '13)
Barbara J. (Scott '12)
Chris K. (Jake '12/Nate '14)
Maria Ligad (Nick '15)
Kim M. (Trey '13)
Melanie B. (Ethan '15)
Kathy M. (Nick '14)
Mimi N. (Will '13)
Lauren O. (Will '14)
Mia P. (Chase '15)
Karolyn R. (Shawn '12)
Karen R. (Seth '15)
Pat R. (Eric '14)
Meg R. (Carter '14)
Kathy S. (Sam '13)
Tina V. (Daniel '14)

[Click here](#) for more information.

In the 2016 **National Geographic Bee**, Antonio M. qualified to compete in the state level competition to be held April 1. Charlie S. is one of five students presented with the **DPL Scholar-Athlete Award** for 2016 at the DPL All-Star Game. 8th grader Sarah H. placed in the top six in the **Diocesan Spelling Bee** and qualified to compete in the **Dallas County Spelling Bee**. Our Religion Scholars Bowl team once again rocked the annual **Reverend Thomas Clogherty Religion Scholars Bowl** competition! They took second place again this year, losing only to Cistercian by a thread! 50 St. Mark students placed in the top six in their categories at the recent **Private Schools Interscholastic Association (PSIA)** academic competition, and 17 qualified to compete at the state level! St. Mark had five students qualify to participate in the **Regional History Bee**. Three students made it to the finals, and 8th grader, Antonio M., won the 8th grade division! Our three finalists also qualified for the National Final which will be held in Chicago in June.

St. Mark Receives Digital Citizenship Certification:

John Paul II Students Earn Gold in Art: The Visual Art Scholastic Event (VASE) sponsored by the Texas Art Education Association was held recently at Williams High School in Plano. 34 public and private high schools competed. Congratulations to **Courtney J. '12** and **Joseph B. '12** who both earned gold medals in their divisions.

Sami C. '10, a graduate of Bishop Lynch High School, has been named Chief Copy Editor for The University of Oklahoma newspaper during her junior year.

Congratulations to **Selena P. '10**, a graduate of Bishop Lynch High School, who will be working at the *South Bend Tribune* this summer, and will be interning with CBS in New York next summer. Selena is currently a sophomore at The University of Notre Dame.

Janice R. '15 is currently serving as the Freshman Student Council President at Ursuline Academy of Dallas. She recently joined with fellow Student Council officers from Ursuline and Jesuit College Preparatory School to welcome Bishop Gregory Kelly. Their photo appeared in a recent issue of *The Texas Catholic* newspaper.



Congratulations to **Casey B. '13** who was selected as one of twenty-two junior Honors English students to represent Ursuline Academy of Dallas at the recent *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Colloquium at Greenhill School.

St. Mark has earned recognition as a Common Sense Digital Citizenship Certified School by Common Sense Media. Last October, we announced that we would be pursuing this certification. The purpose is to equip our students with the skills they need to be responsible online citizens. We have committed to teach our students to navigate the behavioral and social issues that stem from students' online lives. To earn this distinction, St. Mark implemented a detailed program provided by Common Sense Media and achieved various benchmarks to meet the certification criteria. **St. Mark is one of the few schools in the State of Texas to earn this distinction.**



ALUMNI PARENTS REMAIN INVOLVED

Look around our greater Catholic community and our area Catholic high schools. You'll see plenty of St. Mark parents involved at every level. Here are just a few recent examples ...

Ann Rossigno Receives Bishop's Award for Service:

Athena B. '15 represented Ursuline Academy of Dallas at the prestigious 2016 Disney Dreamers Academy with Steve Harvey and *Essence Magazine* earlier this month. The Academy, held at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida, taught more than 100 high school students how to discover possibilities and dream big. Athena was selected out of more than 9,000 applicants and her dream is to become a pediatric neurosurgeon. Because she wants to go into the medical field, Athena learned how to stitch up wounds by practicing on pig feet. [Watch her interview](#), and read more about her experiences [here](#).



Family Update: We love getting updates from our alumni. We especially love getting updates from the entire family! Following are just a few of the things that the GR. family has been up to during the past several years:

Erik G-R. '04 attended high school for two years at Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas and two years at John Paul II High School. He then attended Georgetown University in Washington DC, and played soccer for the Division I Georgetown Hoyas. He graduated in 2012 with a B.Sc. Degree in Mathematics. He then graduated in 2014 from SMU with a Master of Science Degree in Operations Research (applied math in the school of Engineering). Erik has been working for Ericsson in Plano, Sweden, and Hong Kong as a Big Data Analyst.

Congratulations to school parent, Ann Rossigno, who was one of two recipients of this award from St. Mark Catholic Church. The Bishop's Award for Service to the Church was inaugurated in 2012 to recognize the great work and true sacrifice made by lay men and women in the Diocese of Dallas. Nominated by their pastor, parish administrator or diocesan staff member, recipients of this award are practicing Catholics, exemplary volunteers, and known for their public witness to the Catholic faith. While at St. Mark, Ann has served on the parish Finance Council for eight years, in addition to serving on the Fall Festival committee, the auction committee, as a Junior Achievement volunteer, an elective teacher, a volleyball coach, and as a Eucharistic Minister. We are so thankful for her service to our community and are so pleased that it has been recognized by the Bishop.



St. Mark Parents Profiled in *The Texas Catholic*: Some of our school and alumni parents were featured in the January 22, 2016 issue of *The Texas*

Alina G-R. '05 attended Ursuline Academy of Dallas. She played select soccer all her eligible years (including for the USA Olympic Developing Program and Ursuline Academy). She went to college at Stanford University in Northern California, and played Division I soccer for the Stanford Cardinals (NCAA champions). She graduated in 2013 with a B.Sc. Degree in Biology (pre-medicine). She played professional soccer for 1 year (2013-2014) in Frankfurt, Germany and has played for the Mexican Women's National Football (soccer) team from age 17 until the present (attending World Cups in Germany and Canada, as well as tournaments around the world). In 2014 she joined Texas A&M Baylor School of Dentistry in Dallas, where she is enrolled in her 4th semester to become a dentist.

Kristian G-R '07 attended Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas. He played select soccer all his eligible years (including Jesuit Soccer). He then attended Davidson College near Charlotte in North Carolina, and played Division I soccer for the Davidson Wildcats. He graduated in 2015 with a B.Sc. Degree in Mathematics. He is currently enrolled at SMU's School of Engineering, planning to complete his Master of Science Degree in Operations Research (and applied math) in May 2016. He has accepted a job offer at Citi Group in Irving as a newly hired college trainee in their Information Technology (IT) organization starting in July.

STAY CONNECTED

Keep us posted! As we receive alumni updates, we incorporate them into our social media posts, weekly school bulletins, and alumni

Catholic newspaper. School parent, **Melissa Waldon**, who leads the diocese's Office of Disability and Deaf Ministries, praised a co-worker honored with the 2016 Bishop's Award For Service to the Church. Alumni parents, **Mary and Richard Templeton**, were also featured in this issue as attendees at the Our Faith, Our Future 125th Anniversary Leadership Appreciation Dinner.

Ursuline Moms Present at STEM Day: Veronica M. (mom of **Valeria '14**) and Janiece P. (mom of **Jordan '14**), both served as presenters at the recent Ursuline Academy of Dallas S.T.E.M. Day. Veronica is an Electrical Engineer for Texas Instruments currently working in software development. She presented two engineering challenges to the girls which they had to solve, one involving the design and testing of a chip that goes into headphones. Janiece is the Head of Global Giving at Fossil Group. She taught the girls that engineering principles can be applied to attacking social issues that require innovative solutions. The girls were given access to a micro-loan program and were empowered to decide which real-life, low

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.

WAYS TO GIVE

St. Mark Catholic School appreciates your support. If you would like to make a donation of time, expertise, or money, please follow the links below.

*[Donate your time or expertise](mailto:Debbie.reed@stmcs.net) - Simply email Debbie.reed@stmcs.net and let us know what you are interested in contributing to our school.

*[Gap Fund](#) - This fund helps St. Mark bridge the gap between the tuition amount our families pay, and the actual cost to educate each student. For 2015-16, that cost is \$1,280 per student.

*[Technology Fund](#) - This fund assists St. Mark with keeping current on the technology made available to our students.

*[Other Monetary Donations](#) - Make a general donation, or designate funds towards a specific program such as Fine Arts, Athletics, or Robotics.

*[Legacy Brick](#) - For \$100, purchase a personalized brick that will become part of the entryway to St. Mark Catholic School.

*[Merchant Programs](#) - Raise funds for our school simply by linking your Tom Thumb, Kroger and Target shopper cards to St. Mark.

income entrepreneurs received loans for their businesses.

FAVORITE ST. MARK MEMORY

When registering for "Lifetime Lions," you are asked to share your favorite St. Mark memories. **Rachael O. '05** recalls that engaging in community service was one of her favorite memories. St. Mark is still very much involved in all sorts of service projects. One longstanding project in particular is Laps For Leukemia, where our students collect pledges for walking laps in P.E. classes during Catholic Schools Week. Proceeds benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. To-date, St. Mark is proud to say that we have raised well over \$125,000 and have been named the top fundraising school in North Texas since 2009!

**"ONCE A LION,
ALWAYS A
LION!"**

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