

THE QUILL

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Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women

Mercy Theater Dazzles with *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

By Julia Cilano

This fall, Mercy Theater put on a production of the Roaring '20s musical *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. In this production, small town girl Millie Dillmount moves to New York to follow her dreams and marry rich. Once in New York, she meets and befriends Miss Dorothy Brown, an orphan yearning to understand a poorer lifestyle, Jimmy Smith, a cocky young 'Casanova,' Mr. Trevor Graydon, Millie's rich and handsome boss, and Muzzy Van Hossmere, a rich singer full of sage advice and guidance. Mrs. Meers, a suspicious old woman who runs the hotel where Millie and Miss Dorothy live, has connections to loads of unsavory characters and strives to ship off as many orphaned girls to far away factories as she can for as much money as she can get her hands on. The musical takes a turn when Millie falls in love with Jimmy, and Muzzy guides her toward love instead of a marriage for money. In arguably the most sudden and creative twist ending to be shown on the Mercy stage, Jimmy and Miss Dorothy are revealed to be Muzzy's two step children, meaning that both are rich and well-placed in society. Mrs. Meers is exposed and arrested, and Miss Dorothy falls for one of Mrs. Meers's henchmen, Sonny, instead of Mr. Graydon, as a love song at the start of Act Two suggested.

While the plot for *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is a bit outlandish and scattered, it added to the undeniable humor and success of the show. Praised by students and teachers alike, *Millie* was credited as one of the most successful and professional productions that Mercy has put on in a long time. The amazing results of this show were by no means undeserved; the cast, crew, pit orchestra, and directors worked tirelessly for weeks in order to get every aspect of the show memorized, practiced, and perfected. From the music to the sets to the costumes to the lines, *Millie* was demanding and complicated. However, the high expectations written into the script and into the score were met and exceeded with grace, precision, and pure talent. With every trial, tribulation, broken prop, missed line, or difficult

song, the actors, musicians, and crew of Mercy came closer together and stronger.

Officially, there is no announced plan for Mercy's spring production as of yet. Regardless, it will be as great of a smash hit as *Thoroughly Modern Millie* was this fall. It could be said, in Muzzy's words, that this was a performance at the level of emeralds, but without a doubt, the people of Mercy Theater could have "made it on green glass." Until next time when the



Left: The ensemble of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* performs one of the show's many dance numbers. Right: Junior Maddie Berl performs as the titular Millie. Photos courtesy of Mr. Carro.

house lights dim, the minds and hearts behind Mercy shows will roam Mercy's halls like the rest of the OLM student body; but come springtime or the next musical, they will return again to work their hardest on another story, on other difficult songs, and on other challenges which they will undoubtedly overcome.

2017 Spirit Gala Raises Record Amount of Scholarship Money - \$355,000

By LaRue Huetmaker and Elizabeth Meisenzahl

This year's Mercy Gala brought in a record \$355,000 for scholarships and students. People dressed in their finest suits and gowns came to enjoy a gourmet Italian meal and performances from the cast of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and professional musicians. It was the night of the year. Thanks to hard work, caterers, and student volunteers, the school had a very successful night. The school gives thanks to those who put hours into this event, sold raffle tickets, and those who donated money to the school.

The scholarships going to help the students will give young women opportunity and



chances to learn with a higher education. One of the hits of the night was a video that informed donors of the Frances Ward Scholarship their generous donations would fund. The Frances Ward Scholarship is named after Sister Frances Ward, a friend of Catherine McAuley and a fellow Sister of Mercy. After arriving in Rochester and establishing a Mercy community in the area, Sister Ward dedicated her life to helping refugees and immigrants.

For this reason, the scholarship in her name allows girls who have been refugees to receive the benefit of a Mercy education. One such girl was Sandra Uwiringiyimana, a graduate of the class of 2013. In the video, Uwiringiyimana details not only her early life in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also her experience of coming to Mercy in eighth grade and attending through high school graduation. Uwiringiyimana, who recently published her book *How Dare the Sun Rise*, noted that her Mercy education empowered her to be able to achieve many of her accomplishments since graduation, including writing her memoir and speaking in front of the United Nations.

Since then, the Frances Ward Scholarship has continued to give local refugees the chance to thrive in the Mercy community, all thanks to the generous donors to Mercy, particularly those who attended Gala.



Left: People in attendance at Gala participated in an auction as a way to raise money for the school. Above: President Suzanne Johnston speaks to the Gala audience. Photos courtesy of Mr. Carro.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Niece Speaks at Mercy

By Julia Spagnola

On Tuesday October 3, author and activist Alveda King spoke to the Mercy community. Both teachers and students were inspired by King's background, as her own father was the brother of famous civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. During her brief speech, King reminisced on her past, captivating the audience as she discussed the dangers and burdens her family had to carry for bearing the last name 'King.'

Not only did Alveda King share her personal work of being an activist for life, but she also revealed her experience as a singer, songwriter, producer, Christian, and even a cookbook writer. One of the most notable aspects King spoke of and gestured was the connectedness between human beings, especially among the generations. She also told of the importance of family, even taking a moment to share photos of her own family accompanied by one of her own songs. Although Alveda King was only able to speak for a few minutes, she was still capable of impacting Mercy students greatly.



Alveda King, an author and civil rights activist, spoke to the Mercy community in October about her family and background. Photo courtesy of Mr. Carro.

2017 Colleen Harrington Scholarship Award Recipients Announced

By Elizabeth Meisenzahl

One of Mercy's annual traditions on the first day of school is the presentation of Colleen Harrington Scholarships. Given away every year in remembrance of Colleen Harrington, the scholarships are awarded to Mercy students at the opening assembly. The Colleen Harrington Walk, held annually on Memorial Day weekend, raises money that funds the scholarships, which are granted toward the students' Mercy tuition that year.

The scholarship began as a way to honor the memory of Colleen Harrington, a Mercy student herself. Following her sophomore year, Harrington passed away from cystic fibrosis. As a cherished member of the Mercy community, Harrington has been honored since then by the awarding of the scholarship. Both

Mr. and Mrs. Harrington were in attendance at the assembly, and helped to distribute the scholarships, as they have in previous years.

In order to be chosen, students are

“The scholarship calls for students who...represent the spirit of Mercy, consistently work to the best of their abilities, and demonstrate a willingness to serve others.”

best of her abilities, and demonstrating a willingness to serve others.

This year, 11 students were recipients of the scholarship, with one student from seventh grade, Elena Martinez-Nobrega, receiving the award in addition to two students each from grades 8-12. Eighth graders Lola DeAscentiis and Ingrid Miller received the award for their grade, along with Samantha Carey and Kaila Toppin for the freshman class. Margaret Sak and Bridget Taylor were chosen as representatives of the sophomore class, and juniors Emma Daino and classmate Esther Moore were recognized as well. Finally, the scholarships for the seniors were awarded to Elizabeth Catapano and Katie Hobler.

nominated and selected by faculty members. The scholarship calls for students who embody those characteristics that made Harrington so beloved by her classmates and teachers, which include representing the spirit of Mercy, consistently working to the



The 2017 winners of the Colleen Harrington Scholarship were presented with their award on the first day of school. Here they pose with Harrington's parents. Photo courtesy of Mr. Carro.

Red Ribbon Week Encourages Students to Be Drug Free

By Emma Raymond

During the week of October 23, the middle school celebrated Red Ribbon Week. This tradition started in 1985 to raise awareness of the killing and destruction of drugs in America. There was a door decorating contest with the theme 'Your Future Is Key, So Stay Drug Free.' Congratulations to Mrs. Good's and Ms. Geen's homerooms for winning the contest with their stellar door decorations!

There were also fun daily add-ons to uniforms. On Monday we wore crazy socks to say 'sock it to drugs.'

Tuesday we took our 'hats off to being drug free' by wearing red hats, scarfs, and red hair accessories. Next came Wednesday, when we wore sweatpants with a uniform top because 'living drug free is no sweat!'

On Thursday we 'teamed up against drugs' by wearing our favorite team jersey. Finally, on Friday we all wore a red shirt to stop the cycle of drugs. These activities made the week much more enjoyable while still raising awareness to stay drug free.

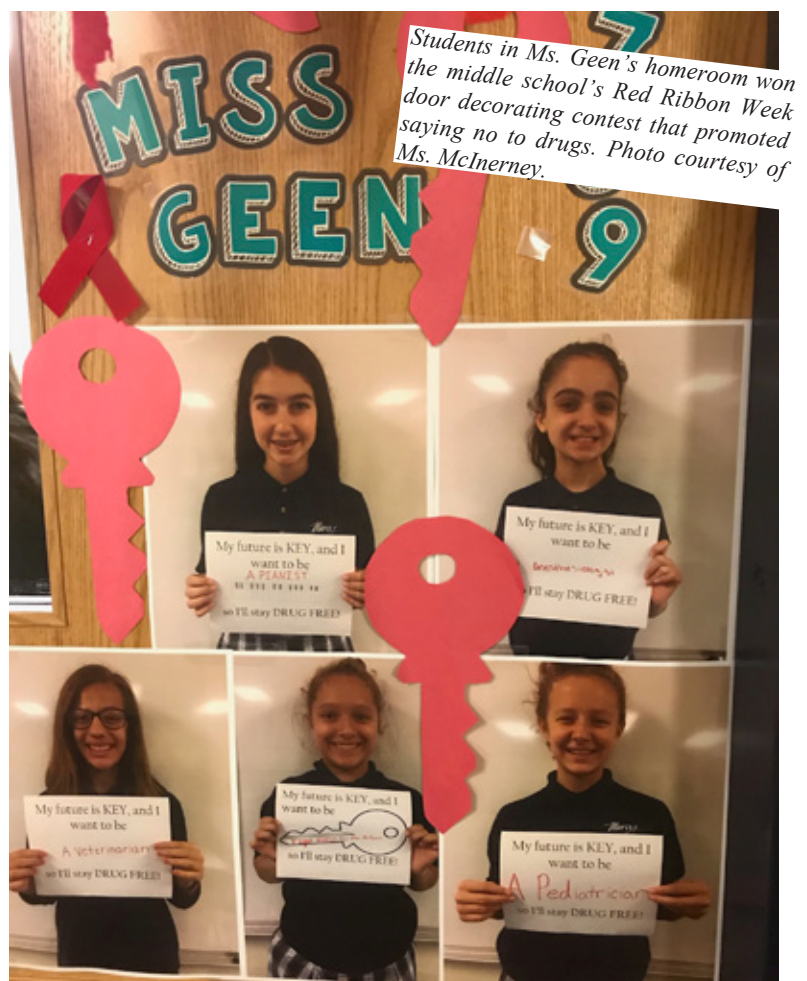
Middle School Celebrates Halloween with Dance

By Lola DeAscentiis

On October 27, the seventh and eighth graders had their first dance of the year. The dance had a spooky Halloween theme and was a huge success! It was held in the middle school gym and was open to all students in seventh and eighth grade from Mercy, McQuaid, and anyone who had received a guest pass from a Mercy student.

The dance was planned by Ms. Crowell and the middle school class officers. This year, the middle dance was enhanced because of a new DJ who offered neat light features, as well as taking song requests ahead of time. Students wore all different types of costumes in spirit of the holiday. The night was a spooky success. Thank you to everyone who attended!

Eighth grader Lola DeAscentiis carved a pumpkin in memory of Susan B. Anthony.



Students in Ms. Geen's homeroom won the middle school's Red Ribbon Week door decorating contest that promoted saying no to drugs. Photo courtesy of Ms. McInerney.

New Grading System Debuts in 7-12 Report Cards

By Katie Giugno

Last month, the 2017 first quarter report cards came out, as usual, bearing great and sometimes not so great news. The difference, though, this year was the format they were given in. As I'm sure most of the Mercy community noticed, grades were no longer numerical, on a scale of one to one hundred, but instead alphabetical with A+ representing a 95-100, A representing 90-94 and so on.

A couple weeks further back, progress reports did not include grades but instead comments on how well the student was doing and how they could improve. Announced last spring as the school year wound to a close, the new grading system is part of a continued effort by the teachers, administration, and other staff members to implement aca-

“... the school intends the new scale to allow teachers to ‘offer more honest, sensible and reliable evaluations of a student’s performance.’”

demical changes-- such as the transition from Regents exams a few years ago-- that would lead to a clearer and better learning process. As the Mercy Grading FAQ page states, the school intends the new scale to allow teachers to “offer more honest, sensible and reliable evaluations of a student’s performance.”

The example provided reasoning that both teachers and students would be better able to see the differ-

ence between an A and a B+ versus a 92 and 93.

Much of the rest of the grading system is unchanged. Being in Honor and Scholarship Roll, graduating cum laude, magna cum and summa cum laude, and joining National Honor Society still require certain grade point averages, generally equivalent to what they were in 2016. However, the opinions of the student body are still mixed concerning this new development. Some like the less competition-focused, less stressful aspects of the new grading system; others believe that the work they did last year striving for, say, a 94 instead of a 91 will be ignored in the 2017-2018 semesters.

For the most part it is too early to tell what impact the grading system will have, but it is clear that, whatever happens, the Mercy community will always strive for improvement.

Grading Scale

95-100: A+
90-94: A
85-98: B+
80-84: B
75-79: C+
70-74: C
65-69: D
64-0: F



Above: Seventh graders assist students at Indian Landing School. Bottom Left: Eighth graders volunteer at Angels of Mercy. Bottom Right: Eighth grade students prepare food at Cameron Ministries. Photos courtesy of Mrs. Randazzese.



Ministry Days: Seventh and Eighth Graders Serve the Community

By Lola DeAscentiis

During the first two months of school, both the seventh and eighth graders had their first ministry day of the year. On these days, they had the opportunity to go into the community and serve those in need. All of the places visited were significant, in that they encompassed the Critical Concerns and Core Values of the Sisters of Mercy.

Although they were on separate days, the seventh

and eighth graders had similar experiences on their Ministry Days. They were assigned a location in which they would spend

a few hours of their morning, some of which were Cameron

“All of the places visited are significant, as that they encompassed the Critical Concerns and Core Values of the Sisters of Mercy.”

Ministries, the Bethany House, Foodlink, and various nursing homes and schools.

The morning began in the cafeteria where Mrs. Randazzese gave a brief talk about Ministry Days, putting an emphasis on the Critical Concerns and Core Values of the Sisters of Mercy. Then, the seventh and eighth graders divided into groups based on their chapter and location, and departed for a morning of service.

Afterward, when the seventh and eighth graders arrived back at Mercy, they were split up into small discussion groups, with girls who had visited various locations, to discuss not only their experiences and what their service entailed, but also what they had learned from the morning and the deeper significance behind Ministry Days. Great job helping the community!



Students and Staff Showcase Mercy at Open House

By Amanda Folwell

Mercy held its annual Open House on Thursday, October 26. With many new families visiting the campus for the first time and the student participation, the night was a success.

Prospective families were given tours around the school based on the grade level in which they were interested. There were three different tours, all led by student ambassadors and teachers: a tour specifically for sixth grade, a middle school tour, and a high school tour.

In addition to the ambassadors, various other student representatives were placed around the school showing off their skills. Dancers were practicing their

numbers in the Black Box Theater, musicians practiced their pieces in the Gallery and high school gym, and artists sat in the art rooms working on their latest pieces. The high school gym was filled with students advertising their clubs and teachers showcasing their departments to the prospective families.

All of the students, teachers, and parent volunteers who gave their time and energy to not only run Open House, but also to set up for it the afternoon before, displayed the best that Mercy has to offer. All of the visiting families left with a taste of Mercy's talent, authenticity, and kindness that night.

Faculty members and student volunteers gave prospective students a preview of Mercy's academics, sports, and clubs at Open House in October. Photo courtesy of Mr. Carro.



Christmas Basket Project Kicks Off

By CeCe Stocum

December is an exciting time around Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women, with the much-needed Christmas break, Golden Mass, and Mrs. Barbero's fabulous Christmas music in the Gallery. However, one of the most exciting Mercy traditions in the month of December is our annual Christmas Baskets!

Christmas Baskets is an annual project run by Sister Pat Beairto and the Campus Ministry Board to extend our blessings to the less fortunate families in Rochester. With Rochester having one of the highest rates of poverty in the nation, the Christmas Basket Project is incredibly important, not only to the Mercy community, but to

“One of the greatest parts of the Christmas Baskets Project is the feeling of bringing the gifts to the families...”

these families all around Rochester.

For anyone new to this experience, every December, each homeroom is assigned a family from the Rochester area. Students and staff then proceed to bring in gifts, food, and clothes for the family. One of the greatest parts of the Christmas

Basket Project is the displaying of them at Golden Mass on the last day before Christmas break. Another great part is the feeling of bringing the gifts to the families. This is why all homeroom members

are more than welcome to assist the CMB reps in delivering the gifts to the families. After all, this is the season of giving, not receiving.

Mercy Continues to Support OxFam in Hunger Project

By Julia Spagnola

This past November, Mercy students participated in their first major service effort of the year, the Hunger Project. On Wednesday, November 8, the entire community came together for an assembly presented by Sister Pat and the Campus Ministry Board. Three CMB co-chairs were selected to carry out and lead Mercy through this critical project. Senior Paige Buruto and Juniors Sarah Longuil and Anna Mason revealed to the student-body that this year the organization that Our Lady of Mercy would be collecting for was once again Oxfam International, an organization that had been welcomed with much success in the Hunger Project the year prior. Through several videos, students realized the importance of such a charity.

Oxfam provides agrarian societies across the world with the supplies and materials they need in order to thrive. These individuals rely on farming as their main source of income, and without items such as chickens, manure, or seeds, they cannot survive or sustain themselves. In purchasing these items at a wide range of prices, different people across the globe can provide these farmers with the tools they need to be economically and vitally stable, giving them hope and peace of mind for the future. As part of Mercy's Hunger Project, each homeroom would

be choosing from a list of Oxfam items and would be collecting donations towards purchasing it. As a bit of inspiration in kickstarting the project, Mercy teachers Mr. Ward and Mr. Thompson processed down the auditorium aisles clad in pig and cow costumes to the tune of the entire assembly singing “Old McDonald Had A Farm,” with Sister Pat playing the role of choral director.

At the conclusion of this brief gathering, the entire Mercy community left with a deeper understanding of what hunger means for those living throughout the world and how organizations like Oxfam International provide sustenance for those in need. Over the course of the following week, each and every homeroom came together to reach their goal in purchasing a specific item, allowing the accumulation of not just teambuilding and unity, but reminding all of what it means to give as a member of the Circle of Mercy.



Family Fun Night and Tasting Trail Bring Funds for Gala

By Gianna Calcagno

There were numerous events that led up to the Gala on November 18. On November 4, Mercy hosted Family Fun Night, which helped raise money for the Gala. Anyone in the community was welcome to come and see our school. This year was a carnival theme and open to people of all ages. There were also inflatable games for kids, music, a gaga pit, face paint, and bingo. One of the big hits was a raffle and many prizes to choose from. There were about 100 people who attended this event, and we raised over \$1,500. It was a night full of family, food, and fun!

On November 17, Mercy also hosted the Tasting Trail. It was open to all Mercy families, but it was an adult-only event. Local restaurants, wineries, and breweries donated food and drinks for tasting. It was estimated that around 100 people attended and all of the money raised went toward the Gala. The Tasting Trail was a preview of the Gala and the silent auction.

Thank you to all of the hard work and efforts put into hosting these events!



Participants in Mercy's annual Family Fun Night Gala fundraiser take part in games. Photo courtesy of Mr. Carro.

Veterans Day: A Day of Remembrance

By Amanda Folwell

Seeing as November is the month of remembrance, it wouldn't hurt if we all stepped back from our busy lives, took a deep breath, and slowed down for a little bit to think about those who have touched our lives. The veterans are such people.

Veterans Day is more than just a free day off from school. It is a day to commemorate the brave men and women who have risked their lives for the safety of our country and its citizens, despite the fact that they have never even met more than half of the very same citizens they protect.

The year of 2017 marked the 98th anniversary of Veterans Day. The day was started in the aftermath of World War I, when President Woodrow Wilson declared November 11, the anniversary of the signing of the armistice to end the war, as Armistice Day. It was finally named a national holiday in 1938, and it wasn't until 1954 when President Dwight D. Eisenhower changed the

name to Veterans Day.

The United States is not the only country to remember the end of World War I. Canada, Great Britain, France, and Australia, to name a few, also commemorate the day in different ways. Canada celebrates Remembrance Day, Britain celebrates Remembrance Sunday (which is the first Sunday in November), and many European countries typically have a moment of silence at 11 a.m. on November 11.



CORRECTION

In the November 2017 issue of *The Quill*, we incorrectly credited Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women as the organizer of the 9/11 Remembrance Mass and Ceremony. It was, in fact, **Mercy Bridges** that organized the events. **Mercy Bridges** is a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy that provides free reading, writing, and English as a Second Language services for adults. We apologize for this inaccuracy.

International Program Celebrates Seventh Year

By Mackenzie Yaddaw

This year, Mercy is celebrating seven years of our International Program, and we could not be happier to reach this achievement. Since the program was started in 2010, hundreds of students from foreign countries have participated in this program to come and experience American culture as well as an American education.

The program is run by Mrs. Whipple, who organizes visas and all of the paperwork needed for the girls to legally be in America. She also organizes host families, along with Mrs. McAdoo, Mrs. Gizzi, and Mrs. Ali, who all make sure each girl has what she needs and is functioning well with the host family.

The young women who participate in the International Program work incredibly hard to

translate what they are learning each day since English is not their first language. This is an achievement many native English speakers would never even dream of doing! They are focused on studies as well as thriving in our culture, which is very different from their own. Academics are incredibly important to these students as they strive to achieve their best in this world.

We at Mercy are incredibly proud of our international students and everything they achieve. We are also proud to have been a part of the International Program for seven years and look forward to many more years to come.



Participants in Mercy's International Program meet in the boardroom with faculty members and other international students. Photo courtesy of Mr. Carro.

Eighth Graders Learn Local History Through Geva's *The Agitators*

By Ashley Brandt

On November 2, the 8th grade went to Geva Theatre to see *The Agitators*. The play is based on the lives of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony, who were friends and

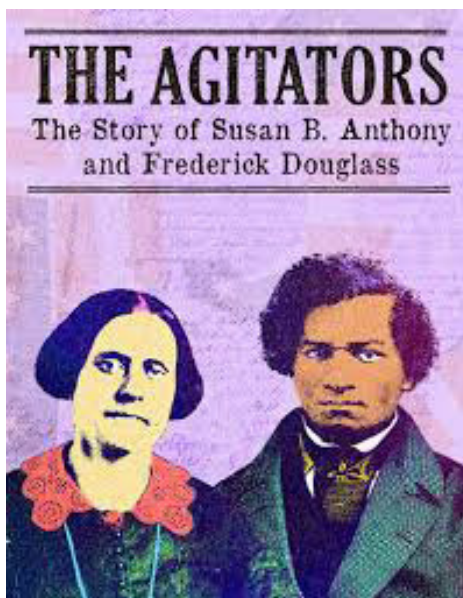
are still important figures in our history, and goes through roughly 50 years to tell this story. Geva's web site had this to say about the play: "*The Agitators* tells of the enduring but tempestuous friendship of Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass... Young abolitionists when they met in Rochester in the 1840s, they were full of hopes, dreams and a common purpose. This is the story of that 45-year friendship – from its beginning

in Rochester, through a Civil War and to the highest halls of government. They agitated the nation, they agitated each other and, in

doing so, they helped shape the Constitution and the course of American history."

The play was full of arguments between the two sides, but also included jokes, laughter and even violin music. *The Agitators* was widely enjoyed by the 8th grade and the teachers who also attended.

Susan B. Anthony, who fought for women's suffrage, lived, died, and is buried in Rochester, along with Frederick Douglass, who fought to end slavery and gain rights for African-Americans. Though he was first born into slavery, he eventually escaped and lived in Rochester for a long time. Together, these two role models were the center of Geva's *The Agitators*, because to achieve their goal, they had to agitate the nation, and sometimes each other.



Mercy Seniors Participate in New Visions for First Time

By Julia Spagnola and Elizabeth Meisenzahl

Beginning this fall, three Mercy seniors are preparing for their careers in medicine and health fields through their participation in the New Visions Program. Katie Titus, Abby Trudeau, and Leah Koonmen are Mercy's first students to take part in the career exploration program run through the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

Titus, Koonmen, and Trudeau join other students from different schools around the Rochester area that participate in the program. The program is highly selective, involving a rigorous application process that includes essays, recommendations, and GPA.

New Visions allows students to gain hands-on experience outside the classroom in the health care field by shadowing at different health care organizations in the community. Known as rotations, these shifts give them experience in a variety of health care settings. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, Koonmen, Trudeau, and Titus attend these rotations.

A wide array of organizations are available for the girls' rotations. Trudeau has so far worked at Recreational Therapy,

a hospice center, and Home Connections, the adult day care at St. Ann's. Meanwhile, Koonmen has worked on both physical and occupational therapy at a nursing home for her rotations. Titus has also been part of a physical and occupational therapy rotation, this one being at St. Ann's as well as part of their traditional care. Currently, Koonmen is in a hospice rotation, and Titus is learning at a nursing rotation.

When they're not shadowing at the hospital, Trudeau, Koonmen, and Titus are able to take classes through a more typical classroom setting in classrooms at St. Ann's Community, an assisted living and nursing home facility. Aside from learning in these classrooms, the program gives the three girls the flexibility to earn credits they need at Mercy, too, including physical education and theology.

Seniors Abigail Trudeau, Katie Titus, and Leah Koonmen are Mercy's first students to take part in the New Visions Program through BOCES. Photo courtesy of Abigail Trudeau.



Mercy Community Celebrates All Saints' Day Mass

By Emma Raymond

On November 1, a holy day of obligation, the Mercy community participated in All Saints' Day Mass. All Saints' Day is not only a time to recognize all canonized saints, but also saints who might be in your family who haven't been canonized.

Newly-ordained Father Kevin Mannara, a priest of St. John Fisher, presided over his first

All Saints' Day Mass on November 1 here at Mercy. His homily explained that we should recognize as saints all people we view as holy and important to us and the Church. Students and staff heard readings from Scripture read by several Mercy students. Mercy McAuley Choir and Show Choir did an excellent job singing the hymns throughout the Mass.

Author Paul Griffin Visits Mercy

By Emma Raymond

Not too long ago, the middle school had the joy of participating in an author visit from the well-known author Paul Griffin. Paul Griffin might sound quite familiar, because his books were chosen as an option for summer reading. His most memorable works include *When Friendship Followed Me Home*, *Saving Marty*,

and *The Orange Houses*.

Griffin talked of telling "your story," along with two demonstrations showing how students can build their own characters along with what they say about their personalities. Mr. Griffin shared his adopted daughter's story as well. The presentation was a great success!

Fall Sports Teams Finish Strong Seasons With Sectional Competitions

By Elizabeth Meisenzahl

With 70% of Mercy students involved in athletics, sports are an important aspect of students' time at Mercy. Competitors in six of Mercy's sports teams proved that throughout the past month with their strong showing in Sectional competitions.

The Cross Country team, led by Coach Tim Jones for the 32nd year, placed third out of 12 teams in the Section V Class B race, edging out Pittsford Sutherland by a mere five points. The team was able to eke out a win over the next team through their strategy of finishing closely to one another, with only a fourteen place gap separating Mercy's first and fifth runners. Junior Sara Ciurca led the way for Mercy, finishing 14th out of more than 80 runners, and missing out on qualifying for the state meet by only a few places. Her teammate Julia Spagnola was close behind, coming in 17th. Sophomore Hannah Chaffer and freshmen Anna Fetter and Mallory Sullivan also scored for Mercy. In a competition where the lowest scoring team wins, junior Sarah Longuil and senior Maddie Dovi played the important role as sixth and seventh runners of putting points on other team's finishers. Six of the top seven competitors who ran at Sectionals will return next year to try for another chance at the podium.

Tennis had success both individually and as a team in the Class A championships. In addition to sophomore Julia Andreach's win as the State champion, the team placed second in the team tournament. After sweeping matches against Spencerport and defeating Canandaigua, Mercy fell to Brighton in the final matchup of the tournament. Individually, Maya Dini, Olivia Tette, Taylor Loiacono, Julia Andreach, Alanna Jordan, and Kathryn Strait all advanced to the State qualifier. Additionally, Andreach and Loiacono placed first and second in Class A, respectively.

The Golf team fared well in the Sectional competition as well, with junior Anika Fischer winning in a tense sudden death round to take ninth place in

"The 200 meter freestyle relay team of Natalie O'Hern, Heidi Klein, Paige Eaton, and Olivia Obuhanych qualified for the state meet . . . the relay team placed 44th overall against teams from across New York State."

Section V. The win also earned Fischer the chance to represent Section V at the state competition this spring. Sydney Carlo, also a junior, qualified as an alternate for the State tournament.

At the Section V Class B Sectional competition, the Swim team had several successful individuals. The 200 meter freestyle relay team of Natalie O'Hern, Heidi Klein, Paige Eaton, and Olivia Obuhanych qualified for the state meet held last month in Ithaca. The relay team placed 44th overall against teams from across New York State. Additionally, Eaton, a sophomore, finished second at Sectionals in the 100 meter breaststroke, breaking a 30 year old school record in the process. Eaton's time qualified her for the state meet in this event as well, where she finished 23rd in the state.

Much like the Soccer team, Volleyball played well in a tough match against the team that would go on to be the Sectional champion. In the Class AA semifinal, the Monarchs fell to the undefeated Victor team after forcing a fourth match. Led by senior Laura Seeger, Mercy never lost heart, even in the fourth and final match, which was decided by only four points in Victor's favor.



Cross Country runners closed their season with a third place finish at Sectionals last month. Photo courtesy of Sara Ciurca.

Masterminds Team Continues Success in Trivia Competitions

By Laura Giugno and Kate Giugno

"In one poem this author refused to be 'A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce.' Another work by this poet observes that 'hedge-cricket sing' and 'gathering swallows twitter' during the title 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness.' This poet of 'Ode to Indolence' and 'To Autumn' also addressed a 'Sylvan historian' in a work that states 'Beauty is truth, truth is beauty.' For 10 points-- name this Romantic poet of 'Ode on a Grecian Urn.'" - from the National Academic Quiz Tournaments.

If you know or want to know the answer to this question, Masterminds is the club for you. One of the lesser known teams on the Mercy campus, Masterminds competes in quiz bowl-like tournaments across the city of Rochester. These tournaments bring trivia lovers from different schools together to test their knowledge in toss-up questions like the one above that can be answered by either of the two competing teams. There are also bonus questions given to the team that answers the toss-up correctly.

The questions are similar to what you would see on Jeopardy and often pertain to subjects that are being studied in class (a big Masterminds thank you to AP World). That's not to say that the team always knows the answers (though the varsity team was the Rochester League 4 Champion the last two years). Some favorite guesses to tournament questions include Smith (the most common surname), John Keats, Lewis Dot Diagrams, Simon Bolivar, and the War of the Roses.

The infamous pencil and paper questions are also always fun to answer, although they invoke widespread panic as competitors drop their buzzers and uncap their pens. Obscure information is always welcome and the club moderator, Mr. Myers, often has additional factoids which he hands out to every member. The club meets on Tuesdays in room 113 (Mr. Stryker's room) from 3 to 4 p.m. We hope to see you there (cookies are provided)!



Juniors Esther Moore and Grace Marcus, and sophomore Paige Eaton, all members of Mercy's Masterminds team, deliberate as a team on a question during a Masterminds team practice. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Meisenzahl.

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Making History! Julia Andreach Defeats All Competitors to Become 2017 New York State Tennis Champion

By Julia Spagnola

They say that “Mercy Builds Strength.” They also say (or in the words of Bob Marley) “You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice.” The same can be said for those many members of the Circle of Mercy. Sometimes, you have to cross the stage at graduation before you ever realize the immense strength manifested over many years at Mercy. You discover this strength when you need it most. Mercy Sophomore Julia Andreach found it at the New York State Tennis Championships on October 30. And she found it in the most triumphant of ways.

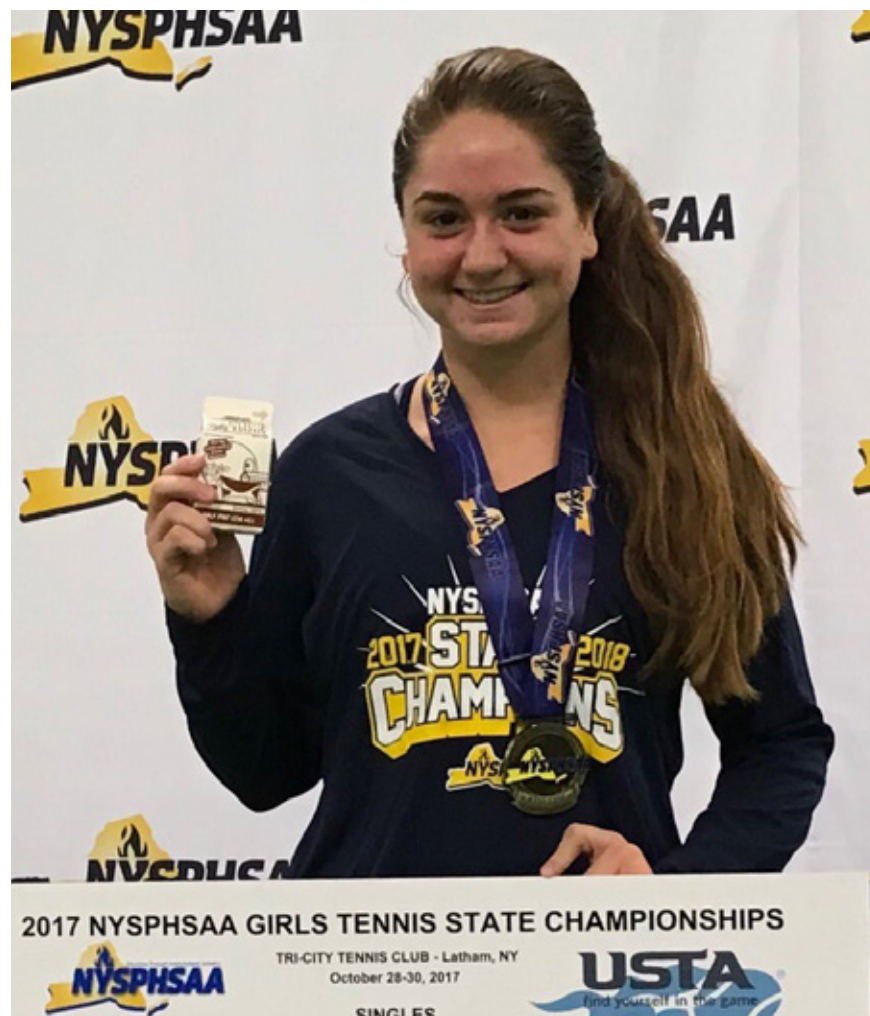
Exiting an undefeated season, Julia Andreach became Section V’s Sectional Champion yet again, following Mercy’s Varsity Tennis season this fall. The team captured a second place finish with many of the girls gaining personal sectional honors. Seamlessly, Andreach qualified for States, making the trip to Latham, New York her third journey to the NYSPHSAA State Tennis Championships. As luck would have it, three times must really be the charm.

In a field of 32 initial tennis singles competitors, Julia Andreach managed her way perfectly, defeating each and every opponent she faced. Entering as the No. 3 seed, Andreach soon found herself facing the favored Rachel Arbitman of Section VIII’s Hewlett High School. In an interview with the *Democrat and Chronicle’s* Jeff Diveronica, Julia Andreach explained what raced through her mind during such an overwhelming moment. She mentioned how she had to force herself to relax, gain composure and control, ensuring the victory that had been just missed the year prior. In assuming her bearings, it’s needless to say Andreach realized her strength. Her focus and determination ushered Andreach to a 6-4, 6-2 win over Arbitman, crowning her State Champion and after three years of ultimate sacrifice and strength, allowing her to achieve her goal. Not only did Julia Andreach bring back this accomplishment as the first Mercy Tennis Monarch to do so, but she also became the only female in Section V, in both singles or doubles, to ever claim a Tennis State Championship. That’s pretty big. As a result, Julia Andreach has been named All-Greater Rochester Tennis Player of the Year for the third time in a row. And amidst these admitted-

ly incredible achievements, Andreach carried with her the most remarkable of qualities that you notice makes Mercy athletes stand out: humility. Win after win, honor after honor, Julia Andreach remained humble and full of positivity, which at times proves to be a greater strength than even the most impactful of tennis swings.

In a video displayed before the entire Mercy community in an assembly to celebrate Andreach’s success, one witnesses the final match point of that last round of the State Championships with Andreach facing Arbitman. Taking her stance, ready to serve, sheer focus and persistence is shadowed in the body language of Julia Andreach. In those final moments, perhaps she already knew she would win, but bearing a face of undying willpower Andreach relentlessly held on the fact that she wasn’t going to let this one slip away from her. In those final moments, as brief as they may be, Julia Andreach became the pinnacle of confidence and poise. From just those few seconds of video footage, you know she must be a Mercy Girl. At that time and place, she not only had what it took to be a State champion, but demonstrated through her relentless strength and dedication that she deserved to win there and then. With the power of a hard-working machine and the skill of a talented artist, Andreach flourished the serve of all serves, delivering the fast-moving ball as it sailed across the net at the most marvelous of speeds. It was the type of serve where just about anyone wouldn’t want to be the person on the other side of the net. Allowing only a few counters by Arbitman, the relentless Andreach responded with a mighty final blow, securing herself the victory. The match ends. People clap. And Andreach, with composure and maturity that comes at a rarity, remains humble.

At her celebration assembly, Julia Andreach



Above: Andreach poses as the 2017 Tennis State Champion in Latham, New York. Photo courtesy of Mr. Yandek. Left: Julia Andreach returns a ball at the 2017 Section V Girls Tennis Championships. Photo courtesy of The Democrat & Chronicle.



Spanish Club Raises Money With Pulsera Bracelet Sales

By Ally Farnand

From October 23-26, the ‘Juan and Only Spanish Club’ sold colorfully woven bracelets, called pulseras in Spanish, to support and participate in The Pulsera Project. The Pulsera Project is a non-profit organization that buys these beautifully crafted bracelets from around 200 artists in Nicaragua and Guatemala and sends them to U.S. schools to sell. The proceeds, explained on their web site, “empower people through secondary education, university scholarships, housing programs, youth shelter support, workers’ rights advocacy, funding for environmental initiatives, and more” in Latin American countries. Simply

put, the money that the Spanish Club raises will continue to employ these artists with full-time, fair-trade jobs.

The bracelets are handwoven, and take an hour to make, according to their web site. The students were eager to see the intricately woven bracelets and were happy to purchase a few. Given approximately 500 bracelets to sell, the club raised \$1,210 dollars from the middle and high school during lunch and advisement. Colorful pulseras now adorn Our Lady of Mercy, fulfilling The Pulsera Project’s initiative, which is to “color the world.”

following her triumphant escort by the school mascot down the aisle as the entire student body rose to their feet, offered the most deserved of smiles. She earned her moment, her recognition, her championship, and the love and admiration of 800 Mercy Girls standing behind her. She gave up everything for what she loved. Through hours of training everyday, multiple trips to out-of-town tournaments, the sacrificing of time with family or friends for her sport came at no small price.

Athletes and natural talents like Julia Andreach who truly love what they do with every fiber of their being don’t come everyday. Needless to say, Our Lady of Mercy is lucky to have a strong young woman like her as part of our community. Julia Andreach, although powerful, doesn’t get her strength from serves reaching nearly one hundred miles per hour or long, seemingly endless matches against a plethora

of notable opponents. Instead, Julia Andreach finds her strength through her learned values of dedication, determination, sacrifice, and most importantly, humility. We may not all get to be future Olympians like Julia Andreach, but it goes without saying that we all can learn a few lessons from her moments of strength and the flawless way she conducts herself as a student athlete.

For now, Julia Andreach will be spending a few weeks away from Mercy and taking her unbelievable abilities to international tournaments in Florida. Speaking for the entire hopeful Mercy community in wishing her well, for the time being our very own Serena Williams will be missed.



Members of the Spanish club, led by Mrs. Cullen, raised \$1,210 for artisans in Latin America selling Pulsera bracelets. Photo courtesy of Kate Pelletier.

The Two Newest Members of the Circle of Mercy: Ms. Arena and Mr. Burleigh

By Claire Devlin and Grace Kurzweil

Welcome Ms. Arena

1. How long have you been teaching? Have you ever taught any other subjects?

I have been teaching for 10 years and I have taught Business and Family and Consumer Science classes.

2. From what school(s) did you graduate?

I received my bachelor's degree from the University at Buffalo and my master's degree from Nazareth College.

3. Do you have any pets? If so, what kind and how many?

I have 2 pets. A Jack Russell dog and a cat.

4. What are your favorite things to do outside of teaching? Do you have any hobbies?

My favorite things to do outside of teaching are to spend time with my family, go out to eat, and play outside with my kids. My hobbies are reading, hiking, and anything near or on the water.

5. When did you know that you wanted to be a teacher?

I knew that I wanted to be a teacher while I was taking a high

school accounting class. I enjoyed the class and the teacher, and from that point on I wanted to be a business teacher.

6. Why did you decide to come to Mercy?

I decided to come to Mercy because of the exciting opportunities that are available here. For example, further developing the business program to meet the needs of the students to be world class learners.

7. How are you enjoying your time at Mercy so far?

I am really enjoying my time at Mercy so far. Everyone from the students, the staff, and faculty have been so nice and supportive. It is a great community to be a part of and I am lucky to have found a school that is warm and welcoming. I am enjoying teaching business classes to a great group of students.

8. Finally, what do you hope to accomplish during your time at Mercy?

During my time at Mercy, I hope to accomplish adding new courses to the business program and to be a positive role model for the young women of Mercy.



Above: Mrs. Arena smiles for the camera. Left: Mr. Burleigh poses in front of the Periodic Table. Photos courtesy of Ally Farnand.



Welcome Mr. Burleigh

1. What school(s) have you graduated from?

I graduated from East High, MCC, and most recently, SUNY Brockport. I am also currently attending SUNY Brockport to receive my master's.

2. Where have you taught previous to coming to Mercy?

I have taught at Rochester Early College International High School and Fairport High School.

3. What classes do you currently teach?

I currently teach College Prep. Chemistry.

4. What is your favorite topic to teach? Favorite lab?

My favorite topic to teach is chemical reactions, in part because students tend to enjoy this topic most. My favorite lab is making a universal indicator.

5. What is your favorite part of being a teacher?

I enjoy seeing students get frustrated, but they continue to be determined to understand the topic. Also, there is foosball in the teachers' lounge!

6. What is the biggest difference between teaching at Mercy and teaching at other schools?

Students at Mercy are sweeter than those at other schools, and they are also harder working.

7. What do you enjoy doing outside of school? What are your favorite hobbies?

Outside of school, I enjoy playing with my two kids, working around the house, cooking, running, and playing frisbee golf.

8. What is your favorite part about being at Mercy so far?

Everyone at Mercy is ridiculously nice and helpful, both the people I work with and the students I teach.

9. If you could have any other job in the world, what would you be?

If I could have any other job in the world, I would choose to be an astronaut.

10. What's your favorite place to visit?

I enjoyed visiting Prague, but also Abbott's Frozen Custard!

11. What is one fact about you that would surprise the Mercy community?

I have lived in Alaska!

Letter From the Editor

By LaRue Huetmaker

It's mid second quarter. Is anyone else scared by that? Midterms. That one word sends chills down my spine. It's no surprise I feel this way. I've always been scared of impending doom. Sometimes it feels like our lives are out of control and the constant whisper of "Will that look good on your transcript?" is looming over us. "Are you sure you want to drop that class? Colleges don't like it." I've heard that one too many times.

I'm sure I sound like a broken record. How many times have you heard this: "We are going through a lot but we can do it together." How inspirational. You can go to assemblies and go on retreats but it doesn't change the fact that you have a lot of homework to do tonight and your project is due in a couple weeks and you only have half of your research done. Comforting, right? I'm not trying to be depressing. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. Here it is: Everything you go through, every bad grade you cry in your room about has no hold on who you are as a person and what you will be in the future. If there's one thing I have confidence in, it's the strength of all the young women at this school and what we all can do in the future.

The future. That's another concept we're all terrified of. College applications, GPA, what's more weighted? TAKE THOSE APs LIKE A BOSS! "Goodness gracious that is not the letter I wanted." Haven't we all felt that way? And it's all for our futures. It always amazes me how some of my fellow students can focus on the one B they got instead of all the As they received. Some people seem to think that colleges are going to look past the extracurriculars, volunteer hours, our amazing education, and all the other good grades and see that one B you got in Personal Finance first semester and not accept you. That's realistic. The fact of the matter is, human error causes... errors. There's no changing that.

There's a stigma that comes with being part of this

generation. People think that we behave with entitlement. "With this generation, we're all doomed." There's a pressure on us to be the best. A while back, going to college wasn't necessary; just go to trade school. Back then, it was work and paying the bills. Now it's follow your heart, do what you dream of doing, go to college. Oh, and pay the bills. That's really hard for someone who wants to be a theater major. For a business major or for someone who wants to go into medicine, you're set for life.

This article is either going to make your pulse go up dramatically or it's going to make you feel like you're not alone. Which way do you think I want you to feel? I assure you that it's the second one. The fact is that stress is inevitable and trials are habitual. But if we channel those emotions into hard work, we're going to be one heck of a generation and one legendary group of young women.

