



St. Mary's Academy
Alumnae and Friends Newsletter

The Echo



Winter 2014

The Echo is published twice a year by the Development Office of St. Mary's Academy for alumnae, parents, and friends.

St. Mary's Academy
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Inglewood, CA 90301
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www.smbelles.org



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St. Mary's Academy
(Inglewood, CA)
or
Alumnae of St. Mary's Academy,
Inglewood, CA

Special thanks to the following
for their contributions to this
issue:

Maria Beltran
Alana Bubis
David Cook
Sr. Maureen Doherty, CSJ
Cynthia Haxton
Linda Ji-Kim
Ria Kim
Roger Knight
Corrine McCall
Liz Mears
Madelyn Murray
Toni Parham
Mary Rose Pascua
Sr. Adrienne Clare Pereira, CSJ
Nancy Portillo
Pash Salehi
Paula Simoncini
Manuel Villarreal

Cover Photo: (center) Helen Guho '36, (from left) Erika Martinez '14, Heather Diaz '15, Joycelyn Watson '17, and Isabela Welsh '16.

From the Principal's Office

On January 7, 2014, St. Mary's Academy celebrated its 125th birthday. In 1889, five Sisters of St. Joseph – four from St. Louis and one from Tucson – arrived in Los Angeles and were ready to start school the next day with about 40 students from grades one through twelve. We have made plans for a year-long, consciousness-raising celebration. We hope to surround ourselves with reminders all year long! A special logo has been designed by Maria Beltran, Director of our Communication Arts Career Path Program, and will be used in a variety of ways to announce to the community that we are "Celebrating 125 Years." We began our year of celebration with a school-wide birthday party with cake and games and the ringing of the bell 125 times!

The past four months as Interim Principal has been a truly wonderful experience! When I agreed to accept the role last July, I did not expect to become so convinced about what I already thought I knew about St. Mary's Academy! Here I met bright, eager, articulate young women. I worked with exceptionally competent and dedicated administrators and faculty. What I had hoped was true for so long is indeed accurate!

I leave St. Mary's in the competent hands of Nancy Portillo, the new Principal. She is fortunate to have the blessing of the Sisters of St. Joseph, a supportive Board of Directors, and a proficient faculty and staff who, together with interested parents and guardians, will continue to guide our young women to truly become *Women of Distinction*.

These months have been a blessing, and I am grateful for the love and support I have received from the total community of St. Mary's Academy – faculty, staff, students and parents. You will always be in my heart and prayers.

Gratefully,

Sister Adrienne Clare Pereira, CSJ
Interim Principal, July-December 2013



125th Anniversary Tea Sunday, February 23, 2014

The SMA Mother/Daughter Luncheon has been reborn as the Family Tea, and this lovely event is quickly becoming a new tradition hosted in partnership with the SMA Parents Association. Spend a delightful afternoon with students, parents, teachers, and alumnae within a campus setting transformed into a charming venue for high tea. Learn about the lives and career plans of our marvelous and talented students. There is no better way to spend a Sunday afternoon!
All proceeds from this event will be used to purchase a new video projection screen for the SMA Gymnasium.



Sister Adrienne Clare Pereira, CSJ (Interim Principal), Nancy Portillo (Current Principal), and Ronald Banks (Board Chair)



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It is an exciting time as we celebrate our 125th anniversary. I am blessed to know that you are a part of this special time and overjoyed to know that you have played such an integral role in continuing the rich tradition and history of what makes St. Mary's so extraordinary.

In preparation for my new role as principal, I researched and read all I thought there was to know about the school. I was greeted with cheerful school spirit, warm smiles, big hugs, well wishes and overall love and support. What I realized was that I had to experience St. Mary's in order to know, understand, appreciate, love and see all of its true beauty.

Together, the alumnae, friends, faculty, staff, Sisters, Belles, The Board of Directors, and family are what makes SMA the place where young girls can flourish and grow into "all of which women are capable," women of character, *Women of Distinction*.

I hope to follow in the spirit of Pope Francis as I lead St. Mary's into an even brighter future by knowing myself and being myself, having my actions communicate values, and inspiring and sustaining hope in others.

It is a tremendous honor to be a part of the St. Mary's family. My efforts and heart will be focused on continuing the mission of creating and developing young women through learning, living, loving and serving.

May God bless you and your loved ones always.

With sincere gratitude,

Nancy H. Portillo
Principal



From the Alumnae Association

On a beautiful Sunday, September 29, 2013, nearly 200 SMA Alumnae, family, friends, and students came together at the Alumnae Association's bi-annual Ties That Bind and Build brunch for a day of inspiration, acknowledgement, and connection. SMA supporters gained a chance to step back from the hustle and bustle of everyday life to absorb the meaningful thoughts shared by Ramsey Jay, Jr. and Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ, to enjoy musical interludes, and to honor our distinguished alumnae: Sr. Louise Bernstein, CSJ '47, Sheryl Lange '67, and Lola McAlpin-Grant '59. We congratulate these outstanding SMA Alumnae, who exemplify what it means to be "Women of Distinction" by their positive examples in the areas of Community Service, SMA Service to, and Professional Service. It was truly a memorable day.



Rosemary Plue '53, Sr. Genevieve Vigil, and Ronald Plue at Ties That Bind & Build, held on Mount St. Mary's College Doheny Campus

As we move forward into 2014, we embark upon a special year for St. Mary's Academy—our 125th Anniversary! Since January 7, 1889, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet have been dedicated to a vision of "helping girls become all of which women are capable." Their original mission of education, spiritual development, and empowerment has not wavered in 125 years.

We look forward to your participation at many events this year including the 125th Anniversary Tea in February, Career Day in March, Derby Day in May, Golden Grads Luncheon in June, and the many class reunions, some of which will be celebrated at our campus. These events will take on even more meaning during this special 125th Anniversary Year.

Let us all make sure the wonderful mission of St. Mary's Academy continues through our generous support... whether it be of our time, talent, donations, and last but not least—prayers.

Blessings to all of you during 2014.

Paula Simoncini and Madelyn Murray
Alumnae Association Co-Presidents



Guitarist and vocalist Sheree Brown '74



Sr. Angela Faustina, CSJ '64, John Martin, and Madelyn Faustina Murray '67

For information about the Alumnae Association and ways to participate, contact the co-presidents: Paula Simoncini at simoncini@verizon.net, (310) 545-3304; Madelyn Murray at madmom717@att.net, (213) 216-6717. Or contact the SMA Alumnae Coordinator, Toni Parham, at tparham@smabelles.org, (310) 674-8470 ext. 214. Also check out the Alumnae tab of the SMA website at www.smabelles.org.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
2014-2015 ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBERS

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VICE-PRESIDENT
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
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POTENTIAL BOARD MEMBER MUST COMPLETE VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
[HTTP://GOO.GL/NXLVJR](http://goo.gl/NXLVJR)



OR CONTACT
TONI PARHAM, SMA ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION COORDINATOR
TPARHAM@SMABELLES.ORG
310.674.8470 EXT. 214

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2014
BOARD OFFICER NOMINATION
SELF-NOMINATION

30th Reunion Celebration
Blue Tie Class of 1984
Date TBD

Contact:
Cindy Irvin or
Tiffany Perise Lauderdale
424-789-9804
SMABluetie1984@gmail.com

40th Reunion Celebration
Gold Tie Class of 1974
Date TBD

Contact:
Patricia McCormick Logan
isidelady@yahoo.com

50th Reunion Celebration
Blue Tie Class of 1964
June 13-15, 2014

Contact:
Mary Alyce Larrabee Danison
310-838-3589
Laura Hewlett Haydel
310-968-7303
64belles@gmail.com
website: bluebellesof64.com

Golden Grads Luncheon
Saturday, June 14, 2014

Alumnae of the Classes of 1944,
1954, 1964, and 1974 are invited
to lunch following the 125th
Commencement ceremonies.

Rest in Peace

*Let us remember in prayer the following
members of the SMA family—alumnae,
friends, former faculty, and staff:*

Anona "Cookie" Adams '65

Marjorie M. Baierski '42

Maria Socorro Carranza '83
(mother of Olivia Avila '14)

Ulysses Lee Clemons
(father of Ursula L. Clemons, Esq. '85)

Patricia Lawler Delany '56

Susan Howlett '65

Loretta C. Jackson '76

Genevieve Oncken Marrin '35

Diane Judith Gurski Munday '50

Deborah Arneilia Williams Peters '74

Joanne Christine Schaefer '64
(sister of Barbara Schaefer Rock '53)

Christal Bernice Smith '85

Dr. Elaine Vaughan '72

Women of Distinction



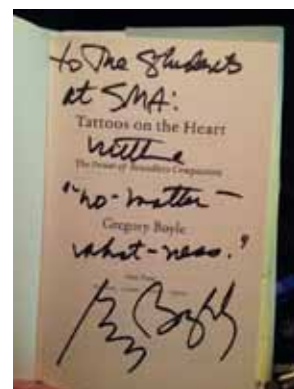
Homeboy Industries and those lives it touched. Two of the “homeboys,” young former gang members, also spoke at the event. They were extremely grateful for the chance to make such drastic improvements to their lives, and it was moving and inspiring to hear their stories. Afterwards, students had the opportunity to speak with Fr. Boyle and his “homeboys.” Fr. Boyle signed the AP class copy of *Tattoos on the Heart*, and students took a picture with one of the “homeboys” (see above).

Belles who attended the event said it was an amazing experience, and they will maintain their inspiration and drive to help others as they continue their lives and community service with compassion and kinship. ■

AP English Class Meets Fr. Boyle

The St. Mary’s Academy 2013 summer reading book for AP English was *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*. The book is a collection of true stories by Fr. Gregory Boyle, who founded Homeboy Industries in 1992 to help former gang members take their lives in a better direction.

On Tuesday, September 17, 2013, SMA students joined Loyola Marymount University students in a panel discussion about the book as well as about the challenges of starting college. This was followed by a university-wide event with Fr. Boyle, who shared many experiences and anecdotes about the founding of



Belles Clean the Beach

The students of St. Mary’s Academy FUTURE Club participated in a beach clean-up service project at Dockweiler Beach on Saturday, September 24, 2013. FUTURE Club is moderated by faculty member Pash Salehi. ■

SMA Athletes in CIF Playoffs

Congratulations to St. Mary’s Academy Cross Country (pictured right) and Volleyball teams for making it to the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Playoffs. The Volleyball team came in 2nd place in the Santa Cruz League. ■



JSA Students Dazzle at Local Convention

SMA's very own Junior Statesmen of America (JSA) chapter attended their second annual Fall State Debate Convention at the LAX Marriott on Saturday, November 10-11, 2013. The event hosted over 30 high schools across the Los Angeles region with over 800 students in attendance.

SMA students shared their point of views on controversial topics such as college investment, celebrities as role models, athletic scholarships, and more.

JSA President and Red Tie Alexandra Chima (pictured right) won a Best Speaker Award in a formal debate, speaking against celebrities as role models. Alexandra is the first St. Mary's Academy student to win this award.

All sixteen of the students who attended the conference represented our school with the utmost dignity, integrity, and poise. Their next big event will be Winter Congress on February 15-16, 2014 at the Torrance Marriott, where they will be able to write bills, cast their votes, and make laws. ■



Current Gold Tie Elected as Jack and Jill of America Regional President

Gold Tie Anna Barefield was elected Regional Teen President of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. This nationally known African American family organization provides cultural, social, educational, civic, and recreational activities to stimulate and expand the leadership potential of children as leaders in all walks of life. Anna's position encompasses a region of seven states. Congratulations, Anna! ■

SMA's Partnership with Operation Progress

St. Mary's Academy is proud to be a new partner of Operation Progress (OP), a program committed to empowering "underserved youth to become educated, capable, ethical and productive people who will in turn lead, mentor and contribute to society at large." Operation Progress guarantees support to selected students from kindergarten all the way through high school in their comprehensive program of the Ten Pillars of Success: Academics, Arts, Athletics, Coping Skills, Ethics, Long-term Commitment, Mentoring, Parent Involvement, Service Work and Skills Training.

On Wednesday, November 6, 2013, former LA Police Commissioner Rick Caruso announced that the Caruso Family Foundation pledges \$5 million to Operation Progress at a press conference held at Verbum Dei High School. Current SMA Green Tie and OP Scholar Jennifer Alvarado was invited to speak and inspired the audience with her testimony.

Other OP partners include Verbum Dei High School, South Central Scholars Foundation, Helping Young People Excel (HYPE), and Strive Los Angeles. ■



Green Tie Jennifer Alvarado '17 impressively speaks at Operation Progress press conference (above) and receives congratulations from Rick Caruso, OP Board Member and sponsor (left).

Annual Listing of Donors 2012-2013

The generous giving of our alumnae and friends supports St. Mary's Academy and our students to be all of which they are capable. This listing recognizes those who have made gifts between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. These are our invaluable partners in mission for whom we are very grateful.

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(\$50,000 and above)

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Eileen M. Rhyner (Nason) '28

Eileen Rhyner, 100 years young, passed away Saturday, February 25, 2012. She was born May 5, 1911, in Los Angeles. Eileen attended St. Mary's Academy, University of Southern California, and Mt. St. Mary's College. A dedicated musician, she enjoyed a successful career teaching orchestra in the Los Angeles City schools before retiring. Eileen's beautiful countenance, with her sparkling eyes and ready laughter, will always be remembered.

Her favorite mantra was "give the world the best you have, and the best will come back to you."

Eileen gave annually to SMA until the end of her life.

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*"Those who
 need money and those
 who can give money meet
 on the common ground of
 God's love."*

~Henri Nouwen~

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