

Gesu School

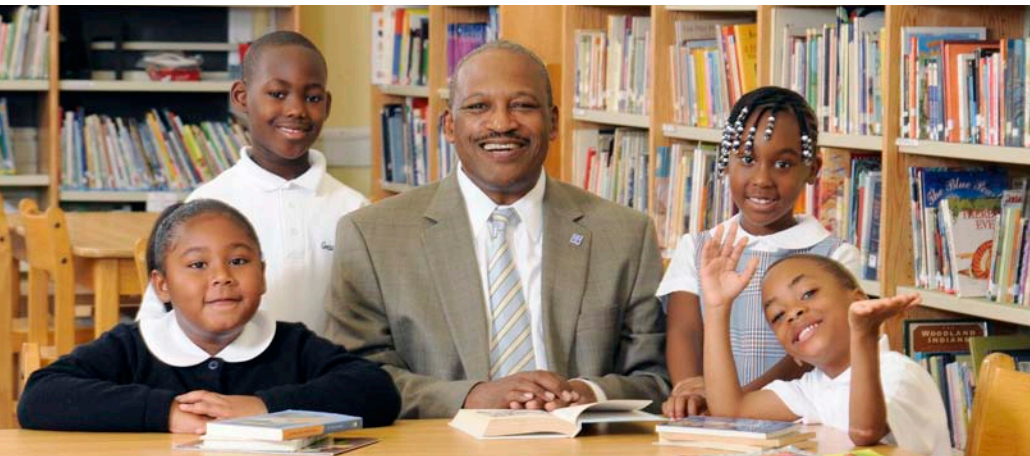
MAGAZINE

Spring 2014

A photograph of two young girls in dark blue hoodies. The girl on the left is whispering into the ear of the girl on the right, who is smiling broadly. They are wearing hoodies with the Gesu School logo. The background shows a crowd of people, including other students in red and white clothing, suggesting a school event or performance.

**Nurturing Men
and Women
*for Others***

FROM THE *President*



Dear Friends,

After a brutal winter, the welcome arrival of spring reminds us of the beauty and value of life. Here at Gesu School we have 450 tender blooms waiting to unfurl. Our teachers and staff give them the extra nurturing they need—and deserve—to break through the rocky soil in which they've sprouted.

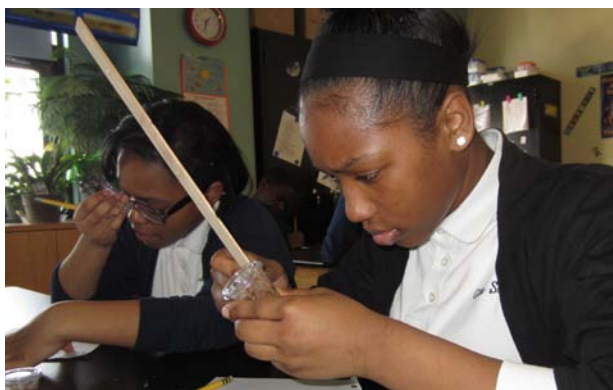
In science lab, the 8th graders have been studying caterpillars—watching them spin their cocoons, observing and measuring them week after week, waiting for the day they will explode in splendid color. Little do these students know, for years we have been watching them in much the same way.

As the 8th graders emerge from their elementary school cocoons, their impressive list of high school acceptances includes The Haverford School, Saint Joseph's Prep, Merion Mercy Academy and Valley Forge Military Academy. You can read the full list of high school destinations at gesuschool.org/classof2014.

I hope you enjoy our inaugural magazine. In it you will find stories of hope and triumph. They are the stories of our children, our teachers, our volunteers, donors and alumni. But in every case, **they are your stories**. The role you play makes everything here possible.

Peace and blessings,

Bryan Carter
President and CEO



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Spring 2014

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Front cover photo: Pre-K students Brooklyn and Channing on the rooftop playground. By Andrea Kellner, assistant to the president



Nurturing MEN and WOMEN for Others.

Recent events reveal that a focus on service and the examples of role models have cultivated a concern for the needs of our neighbors.

Over 32 crates of canned goods for the food pantry. A station wagon headed for the Cradles to Crayons warehouse packed to the roof with baby clothes. Missions jars stuffed with coins and dollar bills.

These are the visible fruits of Gesu School's effort to develop young men and women for others—one of the hallmarks of a Jesuit education.

"The Jesuit tenet calling us to be 'men and women for others' is not just a nice phrase," says President Bryan Carter. "Rather it is an intentional mind-set that we must cultivate in the children and in each other so that we are concerned with the needs of others and not, solely, of our own."

Recent challenges facing members of our Gesu community revealed the inner flames sparked by Gesu's focus on character and service.

Eighth graders help classmate hurdle challenges of recovery.

After spending much of the year hospitalized following a

major medical setback, one of our 8th grade girls recently returned to school. The many hurdles she faces in her recovery include simply getting around the school building. But her classmates have rallied around her in inspiring ways.

"The 8th grade girls have been outstanding with this young lady," says school counselor M.M. O'Neill. "They run and fetch things for her. They form a posse around her so no one crashes into her when they're changing classes. The gents hold the door for her—it doesn't sound like a lot, but for 13-year-old boys, that's a big deal."

The student's mother describes the overflow of cards and toys her daughter received during her hospital stay. She notes how the students, "were just very supportive and lifted her spirit." Her daughter even asked to bring a special lunch to school to thank her classmates for their encouragement and support.

Students take initiative in aiding victims of house fire.

One frigid February day, a sea of neon socks and mismatched shoes flooded Gesu's classrooms and hallways. Students paid \$2 to participate in "Crazy Socks and Shoes Day," a fundraiser organized by

"Since the school does so much for us... we just feel like we're giving back to the community."

—Rhyan, Student Council President

Student Council. A Gesu family had suffered a house fire that left them temporarily homeless, and the students wanted to help. Student Council took the lead organizing additional fundraisers, and the counseling office circulated a list of household items the family needed. Altogether, a community that doesn't have much to begin with sent the family over \$1200, mostly in one- and five-dollar bills.

Organizing efforts to help a student in need is right up Student Council's alley. Service projects are among their core activities. "Since the school does so much for us... we just feel like we're giving back to the community," explains Student Council President Rhyan.

Other Student Council activities this year have included a bake sale for autism awareness and trick-or-treating for the faculty and staff.

Teachers and role models show students that character counts.

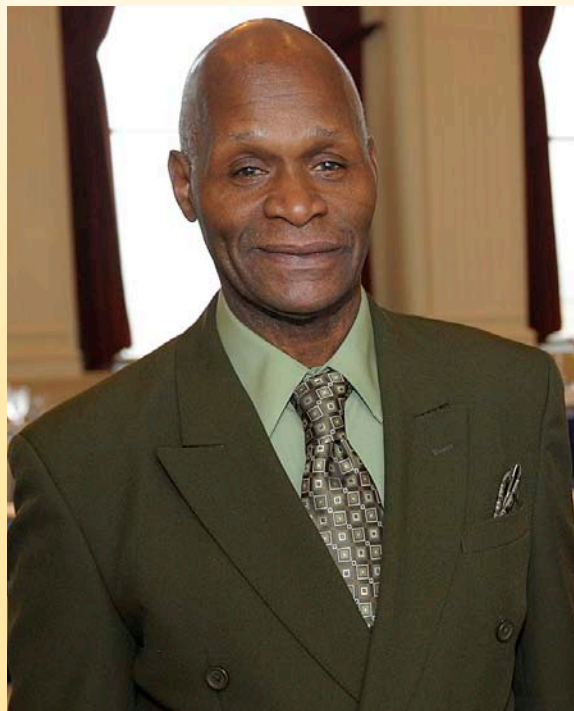
"As an educator, I want the learners who are placed in my classroom to not only do well in their future academic endeavors, but also in their relationships," says pre-K teacher Sarah Weir, who reaches students early by taking time to address her students' social and emotional needs.

"I want my students to be able to be courteous at a dinner party. I want them to have empathy not just for children starving in another country, but also for their coworkers who might be having a tough day. I want them to be able to think carefully and critically about how their actions affect those around them. These character traits aren't in the textbook. They're based on conversations and experiences in life," Weir explains. "And when we acknowledge the children's experiences and take time for conversations, we promote their growth as a whole human being."

While teachers work to instill a sense of caring and service, countless donors, volunteers and supporters like you demonstrate just what it means to be a person for others in your day-to-day life. It seems that the students have already begun internalizing the message.



A student is decked out for "Crazy Socks and Shoes Day." Student Council organized the fundraiser to help a Gesu family that suffered a house fire. A focus on character, service and generosity is part of Gesu's effort to cultivate "men and women for others." Thank you for the ways you demonstrate what it means to be a person for others in your day-to-day life.



Jack Martin:

A living lesson on being a man for others

Mr. Jack has quietly taken care of Gesu's children for over 35 years as a member of the maintenance team. When Principal Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM, arrives at school each morning at 6:15, Mr. Jack is already here and has the building ready to roll.

"Our school depends on Mr. Jack," says Sr. Ellen. "The children depend on Mr. Jack. This is a man who truly cares about Gesu."

Volunteer Keith Pension remembers the day a little kindergartner named Jahmir came to school hungry, disorderly, and wearing pants several sizes too large. He had become disruptive in class and was bearing the brunt of teasing from his classmates.

Mr. Jack quietly pulled Jahmir aside. A short while later, Jahmir came back smiling ear-to-ear, his pants held up by a grown-man's-sized belt with new notches punched into it to fit his child-sized waist.

We all have stories like that about Mr. Jack—like the snow day that he was out shoveling on Thompson Street while the faculty and staff were at home taking care of our own sidewalks. Always the one to go above and beyond, Mr. Jack dug out more than a dozen parking spots on the block so the staff would have somewhere to park when school reopened.

We're grateful to Mr. Jack for showing us what it means to be a person for others!

Beyond the Borders

The Global Smarts Mentoring Program transports young minds from North Philadelphia to the world stage.

Do you know the difference between a preambulatory clause and an operative clause? Or why China abstained from a vote condemning Russia's actions in Crimea at a recent session of the U.N.? How about what to do when someone in the room signals for "decorum"?

Thanks to the Global Smarts Mentoring Program from the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, 16 of Gesu's 7th graders—or should we say the Cuban and Italian delegations to the Jr. Model United Nations—have mastered this and much more.

The Program in Action

"Motion to open."

And thus begins the weekly session in the Gesu library, map on the smartboard, the Cuban and Italian delegations sitting at long tables facing each other.

The students answer questions about geography, get quizzed on current events, and learn the meaning of the word "veto." Then they spend some time on packets addressing one of the four topics they've been assigned to tackle at the Jr. Model U.N. Final Conference in May: the refugee crisis in Syria, gender equality and economic development, the global arms trade, and infectious diseases.

Sean Shtofman and Jade Marie Nesbitt, the group's "mentors," circulate through the room, answering questions and providing encouragement. They are among a dozen college and graduate students recruited and trained by the World Affairs Council to deliver the specially designed curriculum in

six city schools this year. The mentors receive course credit for their participation, and their role includes serving as living advertisements for the importance of getting a college degree.

The students engage in a few more exercises before packing up for the day. After school, a few stay behind to use the school's computers to do further research. Others will finish their work at home over the next week.

Vivienne Ehret, Gesu's librarian, has been a fly on the wall since January. "When they [the mentors] teach, I've never seen kids so in tune," she observes. "They're all listening and participating...They're fascinated."

And rightfully so. Even the mentors themselves have fascinating backgrounds.

Shtofman, a second year grad student at Arcadia University, majors in international peace and conflict resolution. He was in Ukraine a month before the current crisis erupted, speaks five languages, and plans to take the Foreign Services Exam after finishing his degree.

Jade Marie Nesbitt is a junior at Saint Joseph's University majoring in psychology and minoring in Spanish and Latin studies. She plans to pursue a doctorate in psychology with a focus on depression in children.

Limited Exposure in the Urban Setting

Places like Connecticut might as well be as far away as Cambodia for many inner-city students, and topics like international affairs, geography, or how to negotiate a compromise can remain elusive. They need all the help they can get catching up on things their suburban peers absorb on family vacations or at the dinner table.

At their annual Jr. Model U.N. conference, the World Affairs Council observed some of these knowledge and skills gaps. The city students just couldn't debate or participate at the same level as their suburban peers. "A lot of the schools in

(Left) Jade Marie Nesbitt of Saint Joseph's University works with 7th grader Caitlin in one of the weekly Global Smarts Mentoring Program sessions provided by the World Affairs Council.

(Right) Sean Shtofman of Arcadia University reviews U.N. protocols, geography and current events. The program introduces the students to a new way of thinking and a brand new world beyond the boundaries of North Philadelphia.



Philadelphia just didn't have the resources," explains Dana Devon, vice president for education for the World Affairs Council.

To address the disparity, the World Affairs Council piloted the Global Smarts Mentoring Program last year. The program's concrete and engaging approach gives city students the knowledge and skills needed to effectively and confidently participate in the Jr. Model U.N.

The program worked, and the Council obtained funding to double it this year. Gesu School is lucky to be part of the expansion thanks to an introduction made by Gesu volunteer Margaret Lonsetta.

"It's important to give the kids the idea that there is a world outside the neighborhood and beyond Philadelphia," says Lonsetta, who recently facilitated a letter exchange between the 4th grade boys and some students in India.

Budding Global Leaders

The Gesu delegations recently attended the Jr. Model U.N. Prep Conference, where the students from all of the participating schools get expert topic briefings and learn how to write, debate, and amend policy resolutions. The mentors were proud of how prepared their students were. According to Shtofman, Gesu was "one of the best schools at the prep conference, hands down."

Robin, a member of Gesu's Italian delegation, enjoys the opportunity to learn about the U.N. and how to interact with students from the other delegations. She thinks "it's fun to learn about different countries and what's going on politically in the world right now." Perhaps more importantly, she has learned some significant things about herself: "I can actually speak publicly. I can add my opinion, and that's not a bad thing."

"I'm just really proud of my kids and I'm glad that they learned so much," says Nesbitt, who admits she'll be sad when the program is over. She won't be the only one.

Thank you to the World Affairs Council for helping the next generation learn to think creatively and work collaboratively toward solutions for the world's problems!



A leader among leaders.



Philadelphia Business Journal names Board Chairman J. Gordon Cooney Jr. one of city's ten best directors.

J. Gordon Cooney Jr.'s selection by the *Philadelphia Business Journal* as one of Philadelphia's ten most outstanding board directors comes as no surprise to those of us who see his impact on North Philadelphia's children every day.

As board chairman since 2010 and a trustee since 2002, Cooney has guided Gesu School through volatile times, including a challenging economic climate and an upheaval in the education systems. Visionary and strategic, Cooney is driven to see Gesu succeed without succumbing to the fate of so many other Catholic schools across the country that have converted to charters or simply closed.

Under Cooney's leadership, supporters like you brought our \$8 million campaign for scholarships to a close in June 2013. In addition, Cooney engaged the board in an extensive strategic planning process to ensure our students receive the best possible preparation for a swiftly changing economy and world.

Cooney leads by example. He and his wife Gretchen have sponsored 5th grader

Quadir since kindergarten, watching him grow up alongside their own son of the same age. The entire family has enjoyed getting to know Quadir during intense games of Jenga at scholarship luncheons, at their son's birthday parties, and at other social events. The Cooneys have recently endowed a scholarship to support an additional student.

The law firm of Morgan Lewis, where Cooney is managing partner, has provided invaluable *pro bono* legal services to the school's administration, while Cooney has provided career and real-world exposure for the students.

One of his contributions includes arranging for John Thompson, a death

row exoneree, to speak to the 7th and 8th graders. As one of the attorneys who had helped prove John Thompson's innocence in 2003, Cooney joined his client on stage for the presentation.

Among Cooney's most captivating qualities is his recognition of each individual's contributions to Gesu's success, from the office staff to the administration, the teachers to the choir, the donors to the parents. His attention reminds us we are all members of an important team.

Gesu School wholeheartedly congratulates Gordon Cooney on this most recent and fitting honor. We know our children's futures are in good hands.



Gretchen Cooney joins the family's sponsored students, 5th graders Aaliyah and Quadir, at the biannual scholarship luncheon. Apparently the game Jenga was already taken. More information about the Sponsor a Child program is available at gesuschool.org/sponsor_a_child.

Student gallery



A reminder of what art is all about in Ms. Hartzell's class



African Mask
Xavier, Grade 5



Ms. Williamson's Town

Each of the 1st graders drew their own home to be assembled into a village collage.

Personification Poem

from the Backe Advanced Writing Program

The Crash

Diamond, Grade 5

We smashed into each other
Spinning out of control
I screamed for help
People came to see the commotion
The drivers went unconscious
Other cars ran to the rescue
Police cars sprinted to the scene
The news stations came to report what happened
The different sirens roared
It was a catastrophe
I felt culpable but confused
Cars were sitting and watching the action
It was a boisterous scene
One car sobbed in sorrow for the other
Totaled cars
Broken windows
The cars got towed
Stay safe on the road



When I grow up I want to be...
Jeremiah, Kindergarten



Ladybug
Kayla, Grade 7

Magazines can't sing...yet. When they can, we'll include some clips from the choir. Until then, please visit our YouTube Channel for musical selections and other student presentations.
[youtube.com/gesuschoolworks](https://www.youtube.com/gesuschoolworks)

Mad about math in Mary Liva's 3rd grade.

New ACESJU fellow brings charisma to class.

You have never seen a group of girls more excited by math than in Mary Liva's classroom. Ms. Liva thinks it has something to do with the games she's invented to motivate the students to practice. The students seem to agree.

The latest game is called Markle. Ms. Liva used an earlier version to reinforce multiplication tables. Now the students are working on mental division. The object of the game is to earn your way through a series of medals to the coveted gold by increasing the number of problems you can answer in a 30 second window. The first student to reach the gold will get to run around the room to the *Rocky* song wearing her medal. The girls can't wait. But in the meantime, they're having a blast learning division.

Beginning in 3rd grade, Gesu sorts students into single-gender classrooms led by a teacher and role model of the same gender. Ms. Liva believes having a girls-only room makes teaching easier and gives her a chance to do "girlie" things in the classroom. The arrangement also gives the girls a chance to dominate subjects—like math—that can sometimes be seen as the boys' realm. According to the girls, class is "much better" without the boys.

"Mary Liva is a true teacher," attests Principal Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM. "She cares about and challenges each of her students. She has high expectations for each child. The girls have learned much academically and socially!"

Ms. Liva knew she wanted to be a teacher her whole life. She graduated from Villanova University with a degree in communications and a concentration in elementary education. After watching her oldest brother serve in the Augustinian Volunteers and learning about Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education program (ACE) from her brothers who attended the university, she realized she



ACESJU fellow Mary Liva joined the staff this year to teach 3rd grade. Her creative approach motivates the girls to succeed in and love subjects like math.

wanted to do something similar—especially something with a community and faith component. Her path led her to the Alliance for Catholic Education at Saint Joseph's University (ACESJU) and ultimately to Gesu School.

Saint Joseph's University and the University of Pennsylvania launched ACESJU in 2010 to train and cultivate teachers for Catholic schools that serve low-income populations. Candidates complete coursework for their master's degrees in education over two years while teaching at Catholic schools in Philadelphia.

Because Ms. Liva already earned her K-6 certification as part of her undergraduate program, she is pursuing her certification as a reading specialist during her two-year teaching tenure at Gesu School with ACESJU.

While Ms. Liva has some prior teaching experience, the urban setting is new to

her. She finds teaching in the inner city most challenging "when the kids are acting a certain way and I know it's because of something that happened to them in their past... I never had to deal with that, and it's something that's hard for me to relate to." The experience is expanding her understanding and patience.

"Mary has been a wonderful asset to the ACESJU program," attests Elizabeth Gallagher, associate director for academics for ACESJU. "Not only is she a talented teacher, but she is a wonderful community member. She shares her teaching expertise with the other fellows... Mary goes the extra mile with her planning, creativity, and overall care for 'her girls.'"

"One can't help but feel the mutual affection the girls and Mary have for one another. Ms. Liva's classroom is a special place!"

The 2014 Gesu Spirit Medal Honorees

The Gesu Spirit Medal honors individuals who have shown extraordinary commitment to Gesu School through their loyal advocacy and actions, and who have made a significant contribution to Gesu School's success as a model inner-city elementary school. This year's medalists were honored at our 20th Anniversary Gala on May 1st.



Mrs. Elizabeth R. Moran

Every year, Gesu friend and advocate Mrs. Elizabeth R. Moran honors deserving individuals with the Jimmy Coin, an award established in memory of her late son, to encourage those who exemplify his qualities of resilience, loyalty, humility and empathy. Not long ago, the medal was awarded to six noteworthy Gesu School students and leaders. Each awardee gave a second medal to another Gesu community member, creating a powerful ripple effect throughout the school.

Mrs. Moran has deserved to be on the receiving end of a medal for years, and this year we are thrilled to recognize her steadfast commitment to Gesu School and the same noble characteristics she honors in others.

For many students at Gesu, their time here doesn't end when the last bell rings. Thanks to Mrs. Moran's investment in Gesu's After School program, not only are students provided with structured extracurricular activities and classes, but they are kept safe from threatening environments outside of school walls. Mrs. Moran also established two endowed scholarships that will see students through to their graduation for generations to come, and is an active participant in the Sponsor a Child program.

Mrs. Moran's generosity extends well beyond 17th and Thompson Streets. In 2011, Mrs. Moran received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals for the significant philanthropic impact she has made throughout the region.



Rev. Neil Ver'Schneider, S.J.

Like Gesu School, Rev. Neil Ver'Schneider, S.J. celebrates his own anniversary this year—25 years of service to the Gesu community. Fr. Neil arrived in North Philadelphia in 1989 to work with the African American community as assistant pastor of Gesu Parish. Today he is still hard at work in the neighborhood as assistant principal and chaplain of Gesu School.

Over the years, Fr. Neil has been a bedrock of Gesu's North Philadelphia community. While he is best known for the loving discipline he doles out to students in Gesu School's "time-out" room, Fr. Neil quietly assists families in crisis, helps young people find meaning, and offers spiritual guidance and friendship to any soul who appears at his door, from the littlest children to the neighborhood matrons.

Fr. Neil inspires those around him with his frugality (nobody dares throw anything out as long as Fr. Neil's around—he'll find a new home for it!), his humble demeanor, and his reputation as a jack-of-all-trades.

Gesu is grateful to the New York Province of the Society of Jesus for sharing this treasure with us!

For a list of past Gesu Spirit Medal winners, photos and more information on Gesu's annual gala, please visit gesuschool.org/gala_and_gesu_spirit_medal.

Heard in the Halls



For Catholic Schools Week, the Gesu community made cards for Pope Francis inviting him to visit if he comes to Philadelphia in 2015 for the World Meeting of Families.

“We pray that you will bless our city with a visit!” wrote Mr. Osborne and the 5th grade boys. “And after you’ve seen all the sights of American political and religious history, drop by the Gesu School to witness Jesuit ideals reshaping a city!”

First grade teacher Kirsten Echelmeier Sams and **Assistant Dean of Students Troy Sams** welcomed their son Emory Ignatius in December.

The team of **7th graders Robin, Ishea, and Abrim** and **8th grader Mya** took 1st place in science and 3rd place overall at the West Catholic Academic Challenge. Guess those science lab lessons are sinking in!

7th grader Ishea made it to the final round of the IHM national math competition. Ishea will compete against 99 other students for the top honor.

Ashlei Tinsley '06 graduates from Syracuse University with a degree in biology and cultural anthropology this spring. On June 9th she heads to Kenya for a year-long research fellowship on a wildlife reserve with a zoology professor from Michigan State University.

Head of Maintenance Terrence Tinsley received the Jimmy Medal from **Trustee Bob McAlaine**.

8th grader Ashley was awarded the Jimmy Medal by Aids Alive after receiving over 20 nominations from her peers.

NDignite Connection, a program run by the University of Notre Dame to encourage and prepare students for highly selective colleges, accepted six Gesu students for its inaugural Philadelphia cohort: **6th graders Briana, Kyheim and Yasheer** and **7th graders Abrim, Ishea and Robin**.

All three sophomores at Merion Mercy Academy, **Kimberly '12, Madison '12, and Taylor '12**, have maintained 3.5 GPAs this year. Taylor was accepted to attend a selective program at the Mountain School for the first semester of her junior year and Kimberly has been active in the theater program, landing a role in *Almost, Maine* and working the lighting for *Grease*.

Jada '13, an honor-roll freshman at Friends Select, scored 400 points for her basketball team this winter on the

heels of a stellar varsity cross country season. This year she will institute an annual award—a plaque and a \$100 prize from her own savings—to a Gesu student athlete who juggles similar academic and athletic endeavors.

The Gesu staff/supporter rowing team takes to the waters in preparation for the Aberdeen Dad Vail Regatta Corporate Challenge to raise awareness for Gesu School. Team members **Bob Gagliardi, Kelly Grattan, Fran Gray, Seán Lavelle, Maurice McCarthy, Jeremy McNamee, Julianne Meszaric and Paul Welch** will row in memory of their late mentor and Gesu supporter **Toby Wallace**.



Athletic Corner



Bishop Timothy Senior concelebrates Gesu's 20th Anniversary Mass in October with Rev. Neil Ver'Scnneider, S.J., and (not pictured) Rev. George Bur, S.J., kicking off a year of celebration. Thank you for all you have done to support us in our first 20 years as an independent school!



Paul Tough, author of *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character*, addresses the idea of tending to the whole student's needs at Gesu School's Annual Symposium on Transforming Inner-City Education. A recap of the proceedings is available at gesuschool.org/paul_tough.

In Memorium

This year, Gesu suffered the loss of two beloved members of our family, Ms. Doloris John and Ms. Earsel Odom.

Ms. John worked at Gesu School for over 30 years, most recently as our front desk receptionist. She was the keeper of band-aids, the giver of hugs, the home-maker of a school, and a human database of all the students and families who ever walked through our doors. As Gesu administrative assistant Vicki Thompson puts it, "God needed Ms. John to sit at His front desk."

Ms. Odom was the beloved mother of several Gesu students and alumni. Her warm smile brought joy to the school, especially to the kindergartners in Ms. Asta's class where she worked as a teacher's aid. Gesu now has one more angel in heaven to watch over our littlest ones.

New baseball team takes off.

Under the direction of 5th grade teacher and coach Chris Osborne, the brand new Gesu baseball team took the field for the first time on April 9th.

Indoor soccer team clinches championship.

The bench wasn't deep—in fact, there wasn't a bench at all—but the seven players on the Gesu indoor soccer team had heart. Under the direction of Coach Sylvester, the team went on to win its Philadelphia Rec League Championship in a hard-fought game. Congratulations to the team!

Track season is out of the blocks.

The track team is 50+ strong this year. The team competes weekly on the track at Roxborough Memorial High School. Thanks to Modell's, who sponsored the team this year, our runners have two new pop-up tents, stop watches, whistles, and water bottles for their competition. And through the generosity of the organization ClothesPIN and UnderArmour, the girls team enjoyed new T-shirts for training.

Boys varsity and boys JV basketball teams finish strong.

Both the boys varsity and boys JV basketball teams fell one game short of their regional championships. Highlights of the varsity playoffs included a decisive victory in the quarter-finals featuring a half-time three-quarter court buzzer-beater. The JV team logged an undefeated regular season.

Girls basketball rebuilds.

With only one returning player, this year was a rebuilding year for girls basketball under Coach Quieana Watson. The team looks forward to another exciting season next year.

Cheerleading squad takes top honors.

The two-years-young cheerleading squad took 1st place all around at the Archbishop Wood High School Cheer Challenge.

Follow the Dream Tour Returns to Roots

Alum embraces opportunity to give back.

“Mr. Ratliff [Gesu’s music teacher] always said, ‘Keep a song in your heart.’ I did. And here I am,” says Jovon “J” Newman, Class of 2005.

Newman clearly had a song in his heart on February 28th when he and Quintin “Q” Richardson—together known as JQ—performed at Gesu School as part of their Follow the Dream Tour. The American R&B/Pop duo are men on a mission.

After discovering each other at a University of Delaware talent show audition in 2009, Newman and Richardson joined forces on a number of initiatives, including the release of their debut album “Anticipation.” But it was Richardson’s high school principal who helped them discover their purpose.

The school’s head invited Richardson back to counsel a student who was losing hope. The student had missed so many days of school that he would fail out with just one more absence. Richardson agreed to help, and since his intervention the student hasn’t missed a single day of school. The principal encouraged Richardson to help more students.

So JQ decided to take their music—and a message—on the road. The goal of their tour is to “let the kids know how important it is to follow your dreams and to stay in school.” Their first stop was Richardson’s high school. Their second was Gesu School.

The two musicians hope to turn their motivational performance into full-time careers after they graduate from the University of Delaware in two more semesters. If the resounding approval they received from Gesu’s students is any indication, JQ is poised for success.

After JQ’s sensational performance,



After delivering their message about staying in school, Jovon “J” Newman ‘05 and Quintin “Q” Richardson sign autographs for their adoring new fans.

“Mr. Ratliff always said, ‘Keep a song in your heart.’ I did. And here I am.” —Jovon “J” Newman ‘05.

Gesu students lined up for autographs. Before obliging his adoring new fans, Newman delivered CDs and hugs to Principal Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM, and his old teachers.

“It feels really good to give back,” stated Newman, who also noted that “Mr. Ratliff is the one who actually got me singing.”

As a student at Middletown High School in Delaware, Newman made All-State Chorus and landed the school’s first African-American lead in the musical *Copacabana*. He says Mr. Ratliff prepared him for his future by showing him what lots of practice looks like.

Newman wasn’t the first—or last—member of his family to get his start at Gesu School. His brother Paris ’97 went on to graduate from Trinity College

in 2006. Brother Hoskins ’10 heads to Albright College in the fall to major in criminology. And sister Ashley ’14 will graduate from Gesu School this spring.

Thank you to all Gesu’s supporters for bringing programs like music and art to North Philadelphia! You helped make this story of success a reality.



Family members Hoskins ‘10, Ashley ‘14, Jovon ‘05, and [not pictured] Paris ‘97 all got their starts at Gesu School.

Audacious. Bold. Courageous.

At Founders' Dinner, Gesu honors the visionaries who set our mission in motion.

On March 19th in the Justice Roberts Room at the law firm of Montgomery McCracken, Board Chairman J. Gordon Cooney Jr. welcomed a room full of "audacious, bold and courageous" individuals who fueled the fire behind Gesu School's first 20 years as an independent school.

During the evening, Gesu recognized donors of tremendous lifetime generosity, inducted the first cohort of emeritus trustees, honored the team of administrative leaders who commanded the charge over the last 20 years, and celebrated four faculty and staff members with 20 or more years of service.

Then there was Ms. Irma Brown. She fell into her own category: incredible.

Ms. Brown took Septa to the dinner because she doesn't own a car. She lives in a North Philadelphia neighborhood that has seen better days.

Yet Ms. Brown has donated faithfully to Gesu School every month for over 20

years. Her contribution is astounding.

"I give every month because I will always be grateful for the excellent education my children received," Ms. Brown explains. Today her son Stephan '81 is an environmental chemist. Her daughter Renee '82 works with Pittsburgh's homeless population for the Sisters of Mercy.

In his closing remarks, Board Chairman Emeritus Win Churchill summed up the evening: "While it's nice to think in terms of history, founders, etcetera, I think about it differently. In terms of the present. In terms of everyone here tonight. Because the kids change and the world changes and we all need to give it our best shot every day. Indefinitely. We need to look at our challenges with new eyes and full hearts and never rest on our laurels.

"Tonight is about celebrating the next first step, not the last victory."

"Tonight is about celebrating the next first step, not the last victory."

—Chairman Emeritus Win Churchill

Loyola Society

Lifetime giving totaling \$1M+

Dorrance H. Hamilton
The Hubbard Family
The James & Agnes Kim Foundation
Marguerite & Gerry Lenfest
The M & S Foundation
Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus
Keith M. Pension
Ralph & Bette Saul
John J. F. Sherrerd

Maxis Society

Lifetime giving totaling \$500k-\$999k

Anonymous
Arrupe House Jesuit Community
The Backe Foundation
John & Eve Bogle
Win & Ellen Churchill
Louisa Dubin
Eastern Insurance Holdings, Inc.
Peter Gould & Robin Potter
Bob & Anne McAlaine
Mrs. J. Maxwell Moran
PNC
Ruth W. & A. Morris Williams, Jr.

Emeritus Board

Win Churchill (Chairman Emeritus)
Leon Ellerson*
Robert A. Fox
H. Scott Miller
Peter S. Miller
Peter Morse
Ray Rafferty*
Ralph Saul
John J. F. Sherrerd*

Spirit of Leadership Award

Christine S. Beck
Rev. George W. Bur, S.J.
Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM
Sr. Patricia McGrenra, IHM
Rev. Neil Ver'Schneider, S.J.

Faculty Recognition Award

Shirley Bright
Doloris John*
Jack Martin
Tyrone Myers

**Recognized posthumously*



Left: Irma Brown has donated every month for over 20 years in gratitude for the excellent education her own children received.

Top Right: Rev. Richard McCouch, S.J. (representing the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus), Nancy Wingo (representing Dorrance H. Hamilton and her foundations), and Keith Pension are inducted into the Loyola Society by President Bryan Carter.

Bottom Right: Leaders Christine S. Beck, Rev. Neil Ver'Schneider, S.J., Sr. Patricia McGrenra, IHM, Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM, and Rev. George Bur, S.J., are recognized for putting Gesu's mission in motion.



1700 West Thompson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-763-9077
www.gesuschool.org

Events

8th Grade Graduation

June 11, 2014
7:00 PM
The Church of the Gesu
All are welcome!

Gesu Alumni Reunion - All Classes

June 19, 2014
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Dave & Buster's
Please visit www.gesuschool.org/2014 reunion
for more information

Back to School Bingo

September 28, 2014

Please contact the Development Office at
215-763-9077 or development@gesuschool.org
for more information about any of our events.

Visit www.gesuschool.org/calendar
for the latest listings of events,
athletics calendars, and more!



(Left and below) Reading on pre-K's "Thompson Street Beach" is one of the many ways teachers like Ms. Weir make learning fun at Gesu School. Your support makes magical moments like this possible. Thank you!



(Left) The 1st graders celebrate the fact that they are 100 days smarter by dressing as centenarians. Thank you for helping us raise the next generation of responsible citizens.