

**A Note from the Director of Development,
Lou Ellen Stansell**



Annual Report 2017-2018

Dear Families,

As I sit down to write this and reflect on the year that we had, I am struck by the news of the passing of Mary Oliver. She is the arguably, our nation's best-selling, and most well-known poet. Like so many, I return to her poetry in times of joy and loss. One of my favorites is:

Don't Hesitate

*If you suddenly and
unexpectedly feel joy,
don't hesitate. Give in to
it. There are plenty
of lives and whole towns
destroyed or about
to be. We are not wise,
and not very often
kind. And much can
never be redeemed.
Still, life has some possibility
left. Perhaps this
is its way of fighting back,
that sometimes
something happens better
than all the riches
or power in the world. It
could be anything,
but very likely you notice
it in the instant
when love begins. Anyway,
that's often the
case. Anyway, whatever
it is, don't be afraid
of its plenty. Joy is not
made to be a crumb.*

-Mary Oliver

The 2017-2018 year at St. Mark's was a year of joy and loss. We celebrate our tremendously generous community, while still remembering the hardships. With a devastating natural disaster and the loss of our beloved faculty members, Mr. Salley and Mrs. Howard, we trudged forward, and continued to advance our mission, remembering that there is still room for joy.



**2017-2018
Annual Fund**

Although we began with a delayed Annual Fund in October of 2017, we marked another successful fundraising year. We are especially grateful for Gury and Pratik Doshi, who recruited a dedicated group of Class Representatives and worked hard to raise

a record-breaking \$477,925. We are proud to once again reach 100% participation among our Board of Trustees and our faculty and staff, while also reaching 83% parent participation. Donors who gave to our Annual Fund appear on the following pages. These gifts are making a critical difference right now in our classrooms.

Parent Guild & Volunteers

We remain incredibly grateful for our parent volunteers. Our parent organization, the Parent Guild, along with many other groups on campus, consistently offer their time and talents to make our community stronger. St. Mark's parents are uniquely passionate, and their commitment to our community shines through their efforts. We are tremendously grateful for the work of Sara Elkins, who served as the Parent Guild president for the 2017-2018 school year. Part of what makes our community warm and inviting is a collection of traditions like Scarborough Fair, Breakfast with Santa, Parent Education events, Dads and Donuts, Visiting Authors, Grandparents Day, and the New Family Ice Cream Social. There are parent volunteers on our campus literally every day working in classrooms or the library, facilitating classroom events or serving our students and faculty. When we have tried to enumerate the number of volunteer hours that it takes to make a year at St. Mark's run, the process is overwhelming. Our parents don't hesitate; they give into the joy of giving back, and we are better for it.

As I reflect on the year that we have had, it is impossible to separate our successes from the core of who we are at St. Mark's. We hear time and time again, that our families are uniquely engaged, and our community is warm and inviting. We cultivate joy, and we even say that in our mission. Your investment in St. Mark's, whether it is in the form of a stock transfer to the Annual Fund, or a gift in memoriam, or an hour of your time at Scarborough Fair, makes us better. Thank you for not hesitating. Thank you loving us. Thank you for cultivating joy with us.

Sincerely,

Lou Ellen Stansell
Director of Development