

INCARNATE WORD ACADEMY MAGAZINE



145 HIDDEN TRUTHS

41

LETTERS FROM THE IWA ARCHIVE

Name _____

Jan

IWA Choir sings the National Anthem

before the Astros game at Minute Maid Park



Minute Maid Park
Day and Time: TBD

Incarnate Word Academy SUMMER ATHLETIC CAMPS *for middle school girls*



STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

June 10-13 June 17-20 June 24-27

DANCE JUNE 12-14



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Leading Ladies

2019 Incarnate Word Academy Gala & Auction

Saturday, April 13th

6:30 p.m. Cocktails & Silent Auction

8:00 p.m. Dinner & Live Auction

Hilton Americas-Houston

Black-Tie Optional

Purchase tickets at www.incarnateword.org/gala2019

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Vol. 13, No. 2

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THE WORD

MISSION

Incarnate Word Academy provides young women with a Catholic college preparatory education, helping them grow in their relationship with Jesus, the Incarnate Word, and live according to His values. Our cornerstones are academics, values and spirituality.

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ON THE COVER

The IWA M&C team visited the Sisters of the Incarnate Word Convent to research the history of IWA. Photographed are a few of the many hidden treasures found.
Photo by Kevin Lopez

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Anniversaries have a way of instilling pride in accomplishments and a sense of disbelief that so much time has passed. In this issue of "The Word" I take a grateful look back as I celebrate where we are today.

In 1873, three Incarnate Word Sisters arrived in Houston from Victoria, Texas with the love of God in their hearts and a desire to educate young people. They came to a blank canvas, so to speak. There was no established school to simply take over. There was no Board of Advisors and no strategic plans to guide their efforts. It was a start-up operation. It may interest you to know that, in the beginning, Incarnate Word served both boys and girls. It became a "finishing school" for young ladies and even a boarding school, for a time. All of this was part of God's plan that ultimately led to who we are today.

I wonder who could have envisioned the IWA we see in 2019? Certainly not the first sisters who had to focus on the challenges of forming a new foundation of the Order while opening a school at the same time. How did they do it? I believe their strength came from their love of Jesus, the Incarnate Word, their prayer life and their desire to offer a Catholic education to young people. They were true pioneers. Many Sisters followed, blazing new trails, moving the mission forward. As time moved on and the need presented itself, many talented and dedicated men and women joined the staff to serve the mission. With their giftedness and dedication, they have added an exceptional richness to an IWA education. A Board of Advisors and strategic planning committee was added to make wise decisions for the present and prepare for the future. Throughout it all, the mission lives on.

From time to time, I love to look at old yearbooks to get the sense of what it was like "back then." I am always amazed. The first formal IWA publication was The Class Tattler, (circa 1920s), a bound class newsletter, but quite an accomplished piece for the day. Using hand-sketched artwork, a typewriter and a charming writing style, the students reported current events and Academy news. I found that the students spoke their mind on subjects in candid terms, which is both refreshing and humorous. Time passed and our current yearbook format came into existence. It was called The Margil, named after a Texas missionary. The format introduced photography, and lots of it, to tell the story of how Academics, Spirituality and Values permeated the school culture. The yearbook today follows a particular theme but still highlights the three cornerstones, as they chronicle the year in review.

Our graduates add another richness to our tapestry. I love to hear them share happy memories and words of gratitude for the foundation they received at IWA. They recall a favorite teacher, a particular class, a fun time or a confidence-building experience which helped to make them who they are today. We are proud of these Women of the Word.

This year I celebrated my 50th Jubilee as an Incarnate Word Sister. I am proud to be part of the IWA mission and watch the unbelievable progress we have experienced through academics, co-curriculars, sports, fine arts, the Young Leaders Program and the improvements to the campus. I am grateful for the journey we have traveled. Together, we have accomplished so much.

I close this letter with something I truly believe—the best is yet to come! Happy 145th Anniversary to all of us!

Praised be the Incarnate Word,



Sister Lauren Beck, C.V.I.

President of Incarnate Word Academy





Natalie Birney '19 and Elise Amsler '19 thank Sr. Lauren for all of her hard work and caring love she's given to IWA over the years and show their appreciation by giving her some gifts from the heart.



145 YEARS

HIDDEN TREASURES FROM THE IWA ARCHIVES

If the latest Marie Kondo tidying craze tells us anything at all, it's that it's very easy for one person to accumulate a lot of stuff over a lifetime. Now, imagine a time period of 145 years that includes not just one life, but those of over 5,000 alumnae, faculty, staff, parents, and patrons. That should give you just a glimpse into what it was like for the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament to begin to gather the many precious items currently housed in the IWA Archives and Heritage Collection at the Motherhouse Convent in Houston.

Sister Dymrna Lyons who, along with Sister Brendan

O'Donnell, Sister Belinda Delaney (deceased), and Sister Teresita Partin (deceased), took on the task of protecting and preserving a myriad of items put it this way: "Everything was in bits and pieces in different places. When we were living at our 4600 Bissonnet Convent [now Episcopal High School] there was a cubby hole full of treasures. Then we found some things that were scattered under the stairs at the Academy and also under the stairs at our current home. None of us had any archival expertise—we'd go looking and picking up things in different places. But you have to start somewhere."

Start somewhere they did. Specifically, in 1625 when Mother Jeanne de Matel founded the

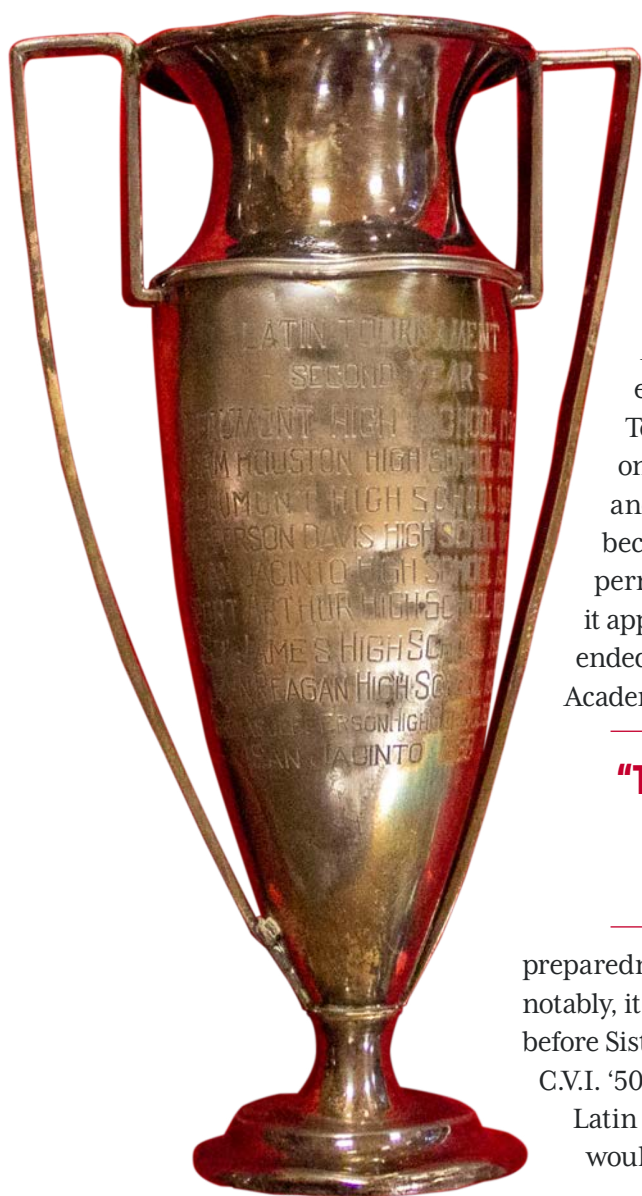
Order of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament. The Archives and the Heritage Room boast thousands of artifacts, documents, and items entrusted to the Sisters during the course of time which they lovingly display in exhibits such as: Congregational Roots in France, C.V.I.'s journey to the new world and Texas, schools and ministry supported by the Sisters, and of course, Incarnate Word Academy. We took a closer look at the last of these and while the objects, artifacts, and mementos on the following pages are in no way a comprehensive history of 145 years, we hope readers may learn something new about our beloved alma mater and its roots.

More than anything, we hope they spark joy.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD ONTO

Athletic Director Coach Perez is known for telling 8th graders on Admissions tours that, “You aren’t going to meet your husband here, but you *will* meet your bridesmaids.” Perhaps there is no better symbol for that than the IWA Class Ring, blessed and bestowed to students at the close of their junior year. More portable than the diploma, a class ring is a sign of achievement and

belonging that Women of the Word take with them wherever they go as a reminder of lessons learned at 609. The IWA Heritage Collection has many class rings donated by alumnae who have passed on, and we were surprised to see how different they were over the years. Styles may change, but being a Woman of the Word is forever. Pictured here is the school ring of Mary Abby Daly, Class of 1915.



VENI VIDI VICI!

Incarnate Word Academy had its name etched onto this Latin Tournament Trophy not once but twice in 1940 and 1942, after which it became a part of IWA’s permanent collection. While it appears that the competition ended after Incarnate Word Academy’s last victory, Latin

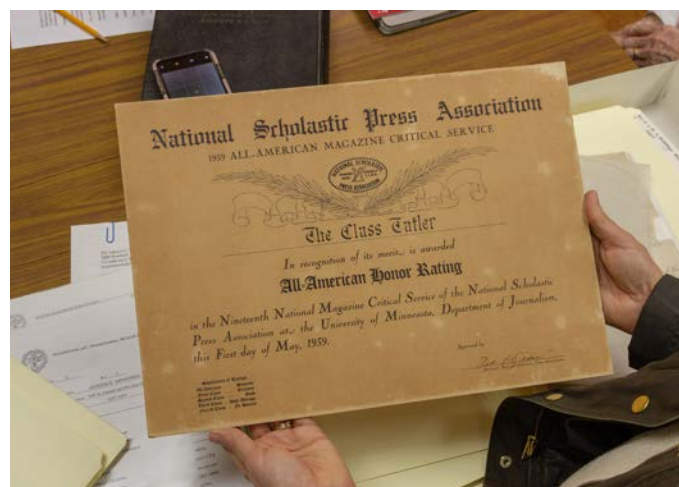
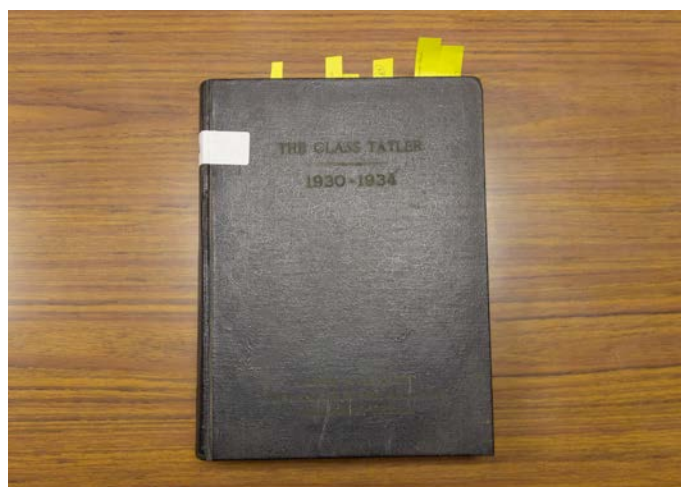
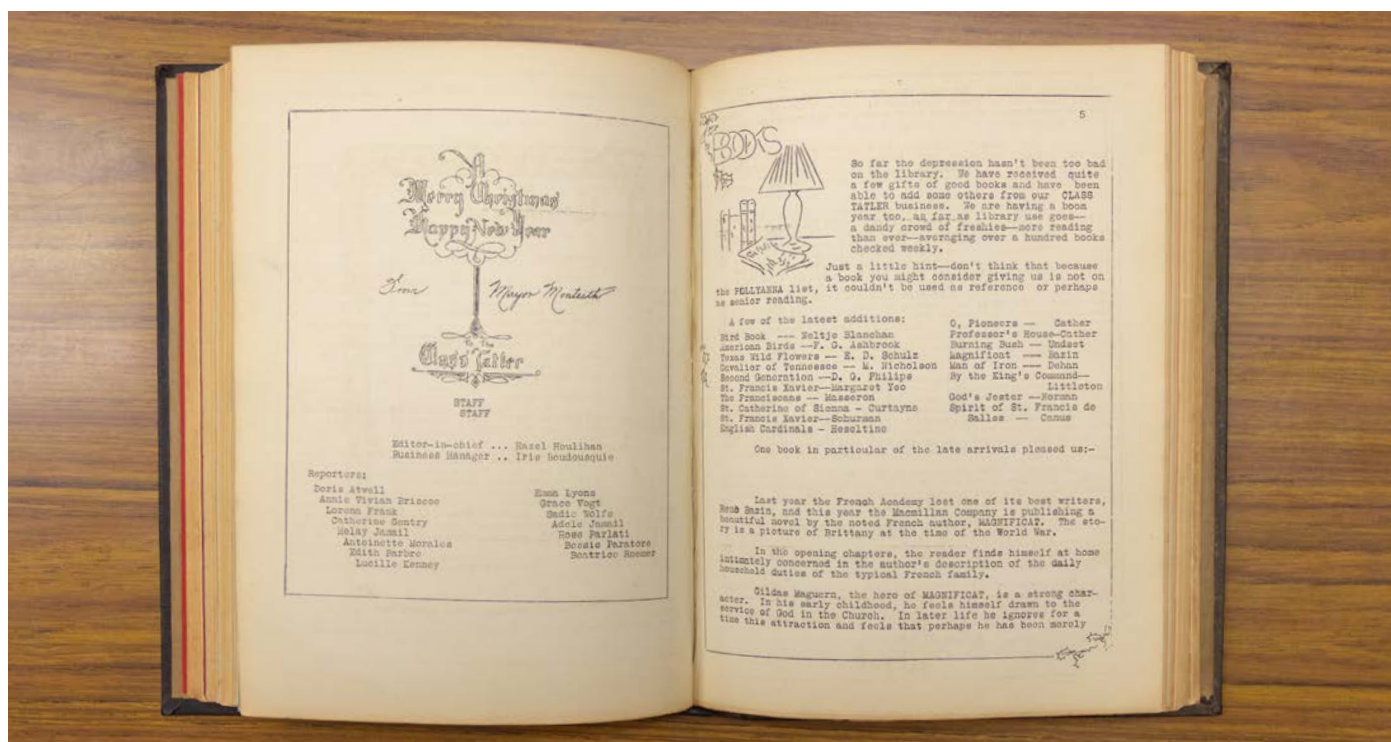
and declensions at 609. When Sister Mark Edward, an admired and award-winning Latin teacher, became principal of her alma mater in 1982, it was not unusual for IWA students to win fifteen or twenty awards each year.

Another noteworthy observation is that many of the other schools who have their name engraved on the trophy (San Jacinto High School, Eagle Pass High School, St. James High School, etc.) seem to have been

**“THE THING THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN CRUCIAL
HERE IS THAT ACADEMICS HAVE BEEN
STRESSED MORE THAN OTHER THINGS...”**

preparedness at IWA did not. Most notably, it would be four more years before Sister Mark Edward Holm, C.V.I. ‘50–beloved IWA alumna, Latin teacher and principal–would learn her conjugations

re-named in the past 60 years or are no longer in existence. Turns out, the fact that Incarnate Word Academy is still a vibrant school–and teaching Latin to students each year–is the greatest trophy of all.



"JUST KIDS"

Started in the 1920s, the IWA yearbook provides the most comprehensive history of the Academy from the student's perspective. The early editions of the award-winning "Class Tatler" feature hand-drawn illustrations, literary works of art, and colloquialisms of a bygone era (see "dandy crowd of freshies" in the spread above). The youthful language of the student-writers jumps out of the page, bringing life

and a refreshing student voice to major historical eras.

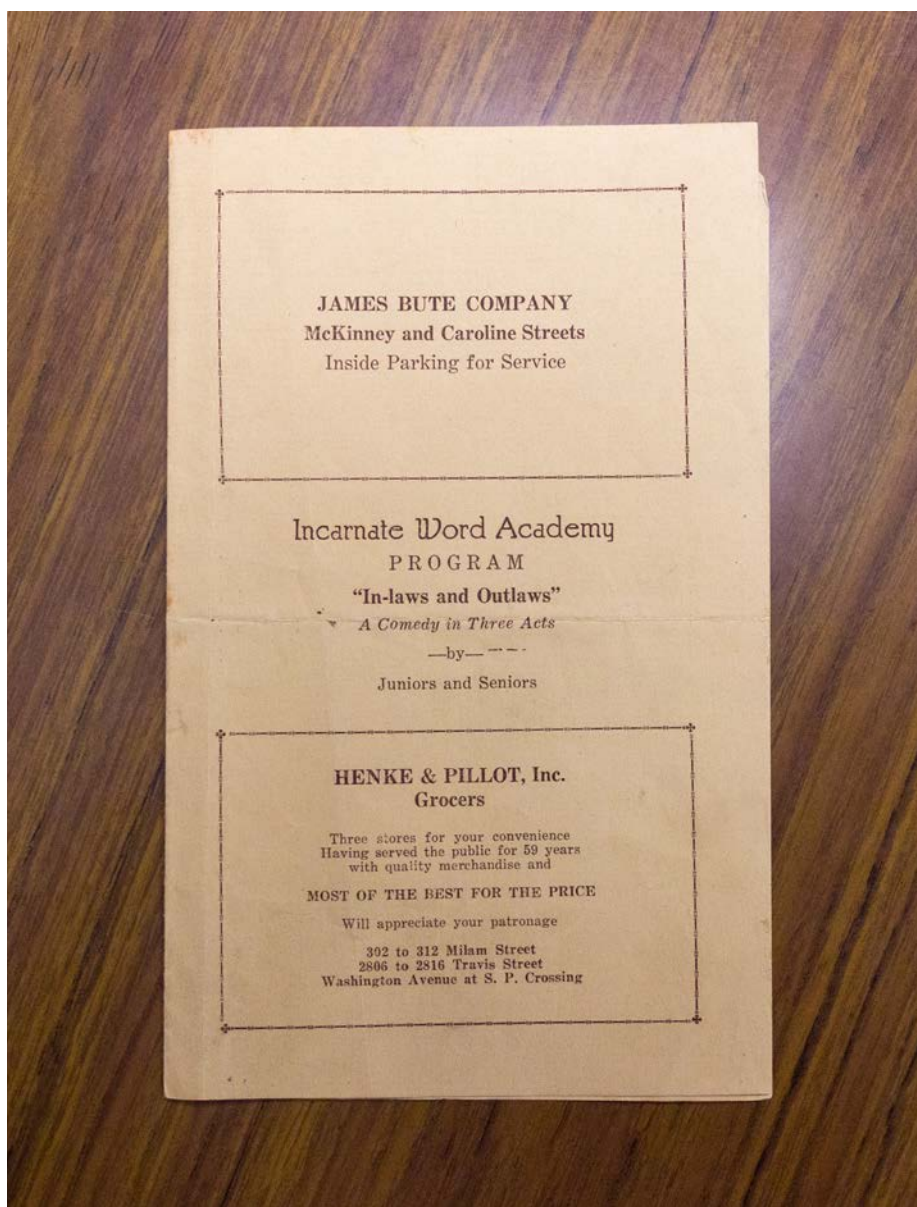
Flipping through the pages of the yearbook takes you through the history of not just a school, but a city, state, and country. The spread above showcases a signed advertisement from then Mayor of Houston Walter Monteith, followed by a recap of library activities that begins with, "so far the depression hasn't been too bad on the library."

With the explosion of desktop publishing in the last few decades, the IWA yearbook, renamed "The

Margil," reflects the design and photographic capabilities now available, but also upholds the tradition of written coverage that showcases everything from reporting of events to first-person profiles. Sister Dympna enjoys flipping through the pages of time gone by: "It's so interesting to see the difference between the styles of language and dress—even for sports—what they could wear and what they could not. But even still they were just kids."

"The Academy has always had a wonderful fine arts program. Even when the numbers were small at the beginning, the Sisters were teaching the students piano. They didn't have much in those early days but what they had they did a lot with."

-SISTER DYMPNA



A PLACE FOR THE ARTS

When many alumnae return to IWA, they marvel at our state-of-the-art facilities, but they are often most surprised by the professionalism of the stage, soundbooth, and auditorium. For many years, IWA students showed off their theatrical talents on smaller stages with much less fanfare—intimate recitals in the convent with a few special guests, type-set programs, and nothing but lung power to project voices from the stage. The students took to the stage annually for “Stunt Night,” which highlighted all kinds of talent. The dramas, musicals, and comedies were presented with great flourish. Despite the smaller scale of production, Sister Dympna assured us their talents were not to be underestimated, “The Academy has always had a wonderful fine arts program. Even when the numbers were small at the beginning, the Sisters were teaching piano to the students. They didn’t have much in those early days but what they had they did a lot with.”



THE LOOK OF LEARNING

Earbuds, iPads, huddle stations! These words and the activities associated with them would have been meaningless to the early users of the IWA library. Pictured at the top are 1950s IWA students reading, researching, and studying

printed books and materials—quietly! They would not recognize the library of today—teeming with animated conversations over collaborative work and thousands of digital resources at their fingertips. Whether an IWA student is searching for background information for a

research project or gathering data for a presentation, she has access to an online reference and electronic database that includes: 42 databases, 17,000 hardbound books, 100,000 e-books, 20 periodicals and newspaper subscriptions, and 26 networked research computers.



WOMEN OF THE WORD

In the early days, IWA's student body was comprised of the daughters of Houston's oldest families from neighboring parishes. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word were semi-cloistered until 1924, so it makes

sense that the school and convent were connected. The Sisters lived on the top floor. This, coupled with the limited emphasis on women's education kept class sizes small. Eventually, the student body grew to include students from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds as new immigrants

settled in Houston and wanted their daughters to receive a good education. The school student body remains ethnically diverse to this day and has grown to over 350 young women from over 100 zip codes in the Houston area.

AROUND CAMPUS



NEW IMPROVEMENTS IN A FAMILIAR PLACE

If you've visited the third floor of IWA this year, you'll notice many improvements to the Library and Technology Center that reflect IWA's commitment to implementing the latest

technology in order to prepare students for success in an ever-changing digital landscape.

The renovations, which include both hardware and software updates, were completed over the summer and have been put to good use throughout the school year

in classes of all disciplines. Though not a complete list of applications, students now use collaborative "huddle-stations" for group work, CAD software for 3D Modeling and Animation, and 3D printers for bringing projects to life in Honors Engineering and Design.



Left: IWA's new 3D printers provide students with a look at new possibilities in technology and engineering.

Above: Creatures were brought to life as 3D prints using computer-generated models.

ENGINEERING COURSE

IWA's newest course offering is a general engineering course developed by the University of Texas at Austin as part of its "Engineer Your World" program.

Students in this course use math and science to solve problems, but teacher Dr. Johnson (a former engineer herself) sees that it opens the door to a much broader world. "Yes, students are required to have course experience in biology, chemistry, and math, but the underpinning approach is broadly applicable to the student's journey of lifelong learning. Students have to work collaboratively in teams and value diverse perspectives. They

"...THE UNDERPINNING APPROACH IS BROADLY APPLICABLE TO THE STUDENT'S JOURNEY OF LIFELONG LEARNING."

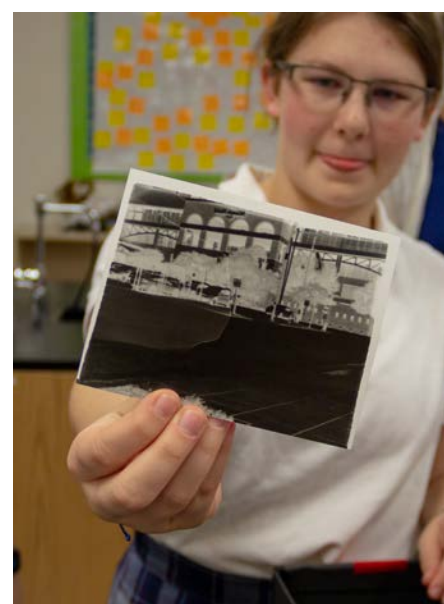
have to demonstrate proficiency in the entire engineering design process including understanding user needs, interpreting project



requirements, and designing, testing, building and—most importantly—re-designing prototypes. You need more than math and science to be able to solve problems successfully."

Thus far, students have created pinhole cameras, reverse engineered a flashlight, analyzed data by brewing coffee, used CAD (computer aided design) to 3D print prototypes and redesigned a building to be earthquake safe.

At the moment, they are learning basic microprocessor programming skills and their final project will involve aerial imaging and will draw heavily on skills learned throughout the course.



Top: Michela Durrette '19 attaches nodes from a motorized base to replicate the natural sway of buildings.

Bottom: Sarah Culbreth '19 with her printed negative using student-made pinhole cameras.

NATIONAL MERIT FINALIST

Norma Ferrel '19 has been named a National Merit Finalist by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). Norma is one of 15,000 students in the nation who will continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million. Over 1.6 million students entered the 2019 Competition by taking the 2017 PSAT/NSMQT.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, Norma fulfilled several requirements to advance in the competition including outstanding performance in the 2017 PSAT/NSMQT and consistently high academic performance in all grades 9 through 12. Additional kudos go to Olivia Ochoa '19 who was named as a Commended Student in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program.



LEADERSHIP LIVE! BRINGS BREADTH OF EXPERTISE TO 609

The Young Leaders Program Leadership Live! Speaker series brings a distinguished leader in the Houston community to speak to students each month. They speak from a wide range of experience and share such wisdom as: how to rise from intern to CEO, how to become a professional wish-granter, and even how to turn a cup of coffee into a beacon for social-justice. Read on for a peek into their leadership journeys.



**ERICA RAGGETT,
FOUNDER OF
"A 2ND CUP"**

Ms. Raggett always knew that she was "a bleeding heart," even as a young girl from Bakersfield, CA. As she grew older, she focused her desire to help others by teaching middle school with Teach For America in Houston. Most recently, her service journey led her to merge her desire to raise awareness about human trafficking and her passion for coffee shops to create a social-justice centered coffee shop in the Houston Heights called A 2nd Cup. It was an inspiring story of what can happen when a heart for service and a passion for coffee shops collide!



**RANIA MANKARIOUS,
CEO OF HOUSTON
CRIME STOPPERS**

Though Boston native Rania Mankarious came to Crime Stoppers with a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and a law degree from the University of Houston, she felt that her biggest qualification was her deep desire to serve families and engage with the public. It is this passion for bettering society that she believes gave her the will and strength to work her way up from intern to CEO.



**COLIN THOMPSON,
SURVIVOR & THRIVER**

Colin Thompson, brother to IWA counselor Emma Thompson, showed that leadership can be a quality at any age. After graduating from Strake Jesuit in 2015, he was in a serious car accident that left him in a coma for 16 days and unable to walk or eat for many months. Colin relayed how his relationship with God and his family gave him the strength to persevere despite setback. His story was filled with humor, honesty, vulnerability, and charm. Colin will graduate from the University of North Carolina this spring. Colin shared, "with God, your expectations will always be exceeded."



**MICHELE WRIGHT,
VOLUNTEER FOR
MAKE-A-WISH TEXAS
GULF COAST AND LOUISIANA**

Michele Wright has granted so many wishes through the Make-A-Wish Foundation that she's lost count! What draws Ms. Wright to this work? "Something about helping others. Nothing else compares. When you've helped one person in need, it's better than anything that you can buy. It gives you joy that you can't experience any other way."



**GINGER SPROUSE,
HOUSTON
HUMANITARIAN**

"I realized that the entire community cared about this situation, but it seemed like everyone was waiting for someone else to take the first step." Ms. Ginger Sprouse told her amazing story of taking the first step with Victor, a homeless man in her hometown of Webster, TX. After driving passed him for three years on her morning commute, she began a conversation with him. This would lead to a friendship that ultimately brought Victor to live with her and her family. "If God had told me at the start what this would lead to, I probably would have been too scared to do it. But God works in baby steps, even when you're afraid."



**JEFF LINDNER,
METEOROLOGIST**

Move over Beyonce, Houston has a new celebrity: Jeff Lindner, the humble meteorologist for the Harris County Flood Control District. As Hurricane Harvey inundated the greater Houston area, Mr. Linder was the reassuring voice calmly updating millions on TV and Twitter. Jeff's story is one of leadership in crisis resulting in unwanted fame. Hear him speak on March 26th at 2:45 p.m.!

LEADING WITH SERVICE, A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

The halls of IWA were transformed into a winter wonderland by a team of students in their end-of-semester project for YLP's Leading with Service. The Leading with Service course asks students to find a need in the community and work to create an extraordinary solution to meet that need. This particular LwS team felt called to bring joy to students from inner-city schools, and so took on the task of fundraising, planning, and executing a special Christmas party for a group of students from St. Pius V Catholic School. After weeks of planning, the kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade students' faces lit up with wonder as they saw a room full of Christmas activities,



Santa Claus, and even a snow-making machine in the courtyard!

Principal of St. Pius V Catholic School, Dr. Felicia Nichols, said: "I can't begin to tell you how grateful we are to your students. I know that this is one of the many memories of their years at St. Pius V that they will cherish for years to come."



Top: St. Pius V students smile as snow falls in the IWA courtyard via a snowmaking machine on the 2nd floor.

Above: The LwS team poses with the St. Pius V students for a group picture.

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR, THE ASTROS ARE HERE!

The World Series Champion Astros outfielders Jake Marisnick and Josh Reddick stopped by Incarnate Word Academy for a surprise visit as part of the MLB's post-season School Surprise October Baseball kick-off. Thirty IWA students were joined by six sisters from the Congregation of the Incarnate Word & Blessed Sacrament for an intimate conversation and Q&A session. Their visit wasn't the only surprise—Marisnick and Reddick presented thirty tickets to Game 1 of the ALDS playoffs. Sister Brigid Cummins,

C.V.I., former principal of Incarnate Word Academy, thanked the players on the sisters and students' behalf: "I want to thank you all for your sportsmanship. I've been following the Astros since 1969. We're very proud of you and appreciate what you do. And thank you especially for today."



Astros outfielders Jake Marisnick and Josh Reddick surprise students with a visit to IWA to deliver tickets and to talk about the team and what it takes to make it to the top level of play through a Q&A in the Leadership room.



ACCOLADES APLENTY FOR IWA ART STUDENTS

Seven IWA students competed in the Visual Arts Scholastic Event (VASE) this winter. Elissa Akuchie '19, Natalie Birney '19, Debbie Dinh '20, Michela Durette '19, Bella Kerfers '20, Suzanna Marbach '19, and Adrianah Rangel '19 all ranked at the top of their Division and medaled. Natalie Birney's sculptural bust, *Face of Beauty*, went on to compete individually at the VASE State Competition and while she favors graphite drawings and watercolor, she found that working in a sculptural medium pushed her out of her comfort zone: "I wanted the fabric to drape but found it was much more difficult to secure. Once I found out we were going to submit to competition I used lots of stiffening spray so that the fabric would appear fluid but

hold up in transportation."

Elissa and Natalie also received recognition for their artwork in the Scholastic Art & Writing Competition earlier this fall. Senior Elissa Akuchie was awarded a Silver Key for her sculpture titled *Metropolitan*. "Ms. Postel asked us to take inspiration from the journals that we have been keeping throughout the semester and I was inspired by the city. I wanted to play with how city and nature interact so I used painting in addition to sculptural elements."

Ms. Postel is particularly proud of the varied outcomes of the students' artwork: "Once the students pass a certain stage, it becomes more about thoughts and ideas than technique. Everyone's art is so different but their ideas are respected." Congratulations to our art students and Ms. Postel for their ongoing success!



Top: VASE Winners with their award-winning artworks.

Middle: Elissa Akuchie '19 with Silver Key-awarded artwork, *Metropolitan*

Bottom: Natalie Birney '19 with VASE State Competition-bound piece, *Face of Beauty*

OFFICE HOURS

WITH JOSIE POSTEL, IWA ART TEACHER

“Love at first sight.” These are the words that Ms. Josie Postel used to describe her feelings about Incarnate Word Academy. She had been teaching math, history, and art at Resurrection Catholic School with several Incarnate Word Sisters when a friend of hers encouraged her to interview for the art position at IWA. When she arrived at the interview, she was surprised to find that it was a Mass Day, so on a whim she went over to Annunciation Church while she waited. “I was so struck by it. I thought, ‘This has to be the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen. What an opportunity for these girls to go to this beautiful church.’ After that, it didn’t even feel like an interview. It was more like they were ready for me to come and I felt that it was the place for me.”

IWA has remained her “place” for the past twenty-seven years and her love for the school runs as deep as her love for art: “The mission of the school is tied into everything we do—all the disciplines. Everyone at the school respects our students. We guide them, but still it’s always about asking them ‘What do you think?’ That’s really important when you are developing as a woman—that your thoughts are heard and respected.”

Many IWA students over the past twenty-seven years have the same kind words to share about Ms. Postel. Michela Durrette ‘19 explained, “By taking advanced art and independent study, I am able to have a creative outlet. Ms. Postel has been a major role model for me because she has an unwavering positive attitude and is not afraid of making mistakes (better known in the art world as happy accidents).”

It may have been a happy accident that brought Ms. Postel to 609 Crawford on a Mass day all those years ago, but it is with great intention that she inspires students in and out of the classroom. “My philosophy is that I want the girls to love art. I want them to understand that we might not all be professional artists, but we can all have a love and appreciation for the ideas that go into someone’s artwork. And if you respect someone else’s idea—even if you disagree—then it makes your own ideas worthy.”

POP QUIZ!

WITH MS. POSTEL

IF YOU WEREN'T A TEACHER, WHAT WOULD YOU BE?

An art therapist! Anything, as long as it’s something art related.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE APP?

I don’t know! All of the apps that are on my phone, my son put there.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?

Little Women. I love it! I always feel like a little kid when I read it.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CONCERT?

When I was about 15, I saw Dick Clark, Paul Anka, and the Big Bopper here at the Houston Coliseum which was the place to be. I remember I got to touch Paul Anka’s arm because he walked right passed me!





Falcon Theatre's mainstage performance of *Hairspray* sparked with all the bells and whistles of a 1960s dance show: colorful costumes, bright lights, big laughs, and even bigger dancing. The outstanding production dazzled the audience from the cheery opening number "Good Morning Baltimore" to the rousing closing victory anthem "You Can't Stop the Beat."

Suzanna Marbach '19 played the lead role of Tracy Turnblad, a relentlessly optimistic high-school student who inadvertently stumbles upon the issue of segregation in her hometown city of 1960s Baltimore. Director Ms. Katy Mulvaney cast Marbach precisely because she saw that same joyful spirit in Suzanna: "Tracy's ability to find joy is crucial

to the movement. She spends the first half of the play learning that she can't ignore the dark spots of the world in favor of her happy bubble. She spends the second half learning that her joy and light are exactly what can sustain the long fight for freedom."

**"...HER JOY AND LIGHT
ARE EXACTLY WHAT CAN
SUSTAIN THE LONG FIGHT
FOR FREEDOM."**

The production was a labor of love for a huge cast and crew that included expertise from throughout the IWA community: IWA Dance Coach Lauren Lacanlale dreamed up choreography with Nicole Fish '21 and Suzanna Marbach '19, IWA Director Josh Wilson provided

musical direction, the Advanced Art class contributed original artwork for the play banner, and Lillian Sudkamp '20 led the formidable stage crew. The spotlights shone on the glowing cast that featured sparkling performances from Katelyn Blade '21 (Corny Collins), Gia Ochsenbein '21 (Velma Von Tussle), Nicole Fish '21 (Amber Von Tussle), and Rebecca Barry '19 (Edna Turnblad) as well as performances from St. Thomas High School boys from right down the road including Antonio Teodoro (Link Larkin) and Noah Mims (Wilbur Turnblad). Faculty Mr. Stephen Comer and Mr. Austin Cruz surprised in cameo roles.

Behind its enviably energetic dance moves, infectiously memorable melodies, and



charmingly crafted wit, *Hairspray* holds a storyline that holds timeless themes like the desire to fit in, freedom of expression, and the far-reaching consequences of injustice and racial segregation. The cast and crew embraced the more serious play themes as much as the comedy; the rehearsal process began with a deeper discussion of the material at hand. Director Ms. Mulvaney explained, “We hope the audience saw in this play what we intended—an attempt to be inclusive, to provoke questions for the audience to answer themselves, and a vision of the world where everyone who believes in freedom and fairness can join hands as one. Maybe someday even the Von Tussles.”



Opposite: Suzanna Marbach '19 (Tracy Turnblad) shows off during the play's finale, “You Can't Stop the Beat.”

Top: Gia Ochsenbein '21 (Velma Von Tussle) boasts a stunning range during a spotlit performance.

Middle: Katelyn Blade '19 (Corny Collins) hosts the Corny Collins Show as the cast concludes their exciting dance number.

Left: Noah Mims (Wilbur Turnblad) and Rebecca Barry '19 (Edna Turnblad) share a heartfelt moment.

ATHLETICS

VOLLEYBALL

Varied experience and playing as a team drove the success of the 18-14 Varsity Volleyball Season. The team had several memorable district wins including a two-and-a-half hour match against St. Pius X. Battling back from 0-2 in the third set, the team dug deep to win the next 3 sets and beat the Panthers 3-2. Coach Perez couldn't contain his pride as he shared, "In my 18 years at IWA, I have never seen a game so intense as this one. I am so proud of their heart and mental strength." Varsity Volleyball also had strong performances at tournaments including taking first place at the Living Stone Christian Tournament Silver Bracket where Merriam Scafide '20 was named MVP.



CROSS COUNTRY

Ask Coach Christopher Warren how this season went and he'll share an exuberant, "We had one of the best cross country seasons in the history of the team!" Backing up this claim are results; the Varsity team placed 2nd in TAPPS District and went on to finish 5th in TAPPS State. Leading up to this season-ender were several first place finishes in both private and public school meets. Varsity took first place at the Montgomery Moonlight Meet and the Brenham "Hillacious" Invitational. The future looks bright for IWA Cross Country with the entire Varsity team returning next year, as Coach Chris puts it, "stronger, with more experience and even higher expectations." Congratulations to IWA Cross Country!



BASKETBALL

IWA Basketball achieved their pre-season goals by making the TAPPS Playoffs for the fourth consecutive year with an overall record of 16-16. First-year coach Ricky Hernandez attributed this solid season to the girls' team culture, and has high hopes for next year: "Our seniors were our leaders and motivators all season. Having said that, our four top scorers and rebounders were all freshmen and sophomores so the future is bright!" Congratulations to Audrey Hernandez '22 who made the 1st team TAPPS 6A District 4 All-District team, along with Amaya Pitts '21 and Anora Lee '22 who made the 2nd team All-District.



SWIM

The IWA Swim Team had one of its best seasons ever, with three broken records and six students competing in five events at TAPPS State—the most the program has ever had. Carson Chesnut '22 made a strong debut in her first year of high school athletics by breaking IWA's school record in the 50m Free at TAPPS Regionals with a time of 26:31. Laura Cromwell '20 beat her own school record at TAPPS State in the 500m Free with a time of 5:50:41. The 200m Free Relay team of Eileen Evans '20, Laura Cromwell '20, Daniela Taboada '21, Carson Chesnut '22 also beat the school record with a time of 1:52:42.



SOCCER

Bravo to team captain and goalie Ava Brendgord '19 who, as the only senior on the team, led IWA Soccer to their best season record (9-9-1) since the program's inception. The young team closed out the season at the District Tournament. Adriana Rucoba '20 made the Second Team All-District. Coach Bryan Gonzalez shared, "This was a great season for our team and we're already looking forward to next year because we have all the players coming back except one."



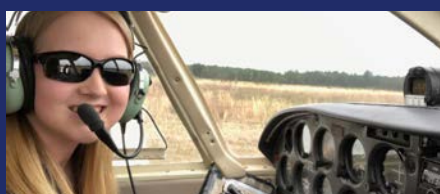
A FALCON TAKES FLIGHT

Parents, teammates, and classmates watched proudly as Morgan Sword '19 put pen to paper on the 2019 National Signing Day and committed to play golf at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. She is the first Incarnate Word Academy graduate to play golf at the collegiate level.

Morgan started playing golf in the sixth grade but says it wasn't until joining the IWA team that she really loved the game. "It was not until high school that I could see progress with every practice, and I generally loved going out with my coaches and friends to play. I love that it's a game that constantly puts me in new positions. I like how it makes

me think critically before each shot because every situation is different, which is challenging but rewarding."

Morgan will put this positive attitude to use not just on the course, but in the sky—Morgan will matriculate into Rocky Mountain College's world-renowned aviation program to pursue her dream of becoming a pilot. "I began pursuing aviation at the end of my junior year. My grandpa was a Naval Aviator who flew the P-3 Orion and I have many family friends that are also pilots. Through them I began considering



aviation, and started flight lessons during October of my senior year." Morgan's parents echoed her excitement are thrilled for her next chapter: "Today is the culmination of many years of determination, practice, and hard work. We are thrilled for Morgan and can't wait for her to step out of her dorm room and onto the tarmac!"



WORD IN THE WORLD



CLOSE UP: WASHINGTON D.C.

Nine IWA seniors traveled to Washington D.C. this January with the Close Up High School Program, a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization which aims to inform, inspire and empower young people to exercise their rights and accept the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. The students spent six days interacting with the people, processes, and places that make America's federal city so unique. Attendee Meredith Britt '19 shared that the trip was "life-changing" and added that she "got much more comfortable with respectfully expressing my opinion." This year, students had several meetings with

high-level politicians including newly-elected Texas Congressman Dan Crenshaw and Senator Fischer from Nebraska. The trip concluded with a chance encounter with Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner

and Junior Senator Ted Cruz at Reagan Airport. One thing we think everyone can agree on? D.C. is great, but there is no place like Houston, Texas.

Above: IWA girls thanked Mayor Sylvester Turner for all of his service at Reagan Airport.
Below: The Close Up students congratulate TX Rep. Dan Crenshaw on his recent election victory.



RALLY FOR LIFE

The IWA club Falcons for Life organized a group of fourteen students and two chaperones to stand for life with thousands of others at the annual Rally for Life in Austin, Texas. Students processed through downtown to the Capitol steps, where a rally led by bishops, religious leaders, state politicians, and activists gave personal testimonies to inspire students to build a culture of life. IWA Theology Teacher and Falcons for Life moderator Austin Cruz was wholeheartedly impressed: “Our



"But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace." -Gal. 1:15

girls were excited but poised. Some led a rosary while marching, while others joined in chants or marched peacefully. I think they set a great

example for other high school students with their maturity, seriousness, and enthusiasm."

PUBLISHED FACULTY

BREATHING AGAIN: A HURRICANE HARVEY MEMOIR

"For me, writing is a place of both solace and joy as I process life through a lens of faith. One night after working in a Hurricane Harvey shelter, I started to write about the stories of the people I met that day. Where is God in all this upheaval and destruction? Where is the face of Jesus among us? What emerged was my own memoir of hope and resiliency interweaving stories of Hurricane Harvey with flashbacks in my own life. Ultimately, *Breathing Again* is a story of faith, community, friendship, and resilience intended to give the reader a glimpse of hope and healing in 'life's storms.'"

-Rachel Valka, *Campus Minister & Theology Teacher*



LOCK BY LOCK

"As I introduced it on Twitter: 'Ever wish Delilah could tell her version of the Samson & Delilah story? Ever wish she could do it in iambic pentameter?' It all began when I was in a Bible study that covered Judges, and I was very nervous when we got the Samson story. The more I thought about it, the more dissatisfied I was with the traditional and non-traditional interpretations of the story. So I started writing in the Shakespearean style poetry I had learned in graduate school, and I found the story I longed for. The more beautiful story hidden beneath the easy moral of 'don't trust outsiders!' was, quite simply, about love—of husband and wife, of country, and of God."

-Katherine Mulvaney, *Fine Arts Chair & Theatre Teacher*

INTERESTED IN READING MORE? BOTH BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ON AMAZON.COM!

IWA CHOIR CELEBRATES NEIGHBOR'S SESQUICENTENIAL

Incarnate Word Academy was proud to co-host the "Singing God's Praises" concert—one of the many events that Annunciation Church has put on as they gear up for the 150th anniversary of the laying of their cornerstone on April 25, 2019. Fr. Paul Felix, pastor of the Church of the Annunciation, invited the IWA choir to join the Annunciation Choir Solla Stella "in raising our voices as one in praise of God and all of our shared blessings." Guests took in the majesty of the historic church while enjoying the beautiful voices of the choirs who sang many beloved Marian hymns as well as a prayerful rendition of the Alma Mater.

The sesquicentennial celebrations will continue for Annunciation Church throughout the fall, and will include a special Mass commemorating all weddings celebrated at Annunciation. For more information, visit www.annunciationcc.org



IWA VOICES ECHO ACROSS TEXAS

The IWA Choir competed at the highest levels in the state this year, under the leadership of Music Director Joshua Wilson. The journey began when several members submitted recorded auditions into the Texas Private Schools Music Educators Association (TPMSEA) Region 3 contest and were ranked by a panel of five judges. Four students were selected to perform with the All-Region Choir. Sofia Garza '21 (Soprano 1), Dominique Nanquil '20 (Soprano 2), Maria Bello '20 (Alto 2), and Elise Potier '22 (Alto 2) performed at the All-Region Choir Concert at St. Agnes Academy in the fall.

These students continued in the competition at the state level and Dominique, Sofia, and Elise made IWA history by being the first three students ever chosen to perform in the TPSMEA All-State Choir. After two days of rehearsals with top vocal talent from across Texas, the IWA students performed at Eisemann Center for the Performing Arts led by Dr. Carolyn Cruse from Texas Tech University. Congratulations to these hardworking student-musicians for being selected into the Region and State Choirs!

IMPACT DANCE SHINES IN FIRST SEASON

Founded just one year ago, IWA's Impact Dance Team is already making waves in dance competitions across Houston. The team of 11 dancers headed into this year with the goal of making a strong debut in competitions, and accomplished just that in individual and ensemble performances at both the Crowd Pleasers Dance Competition and Ascension Competition. The team brought home several trophies and awards including: Best in Class, Outstanding Performance Quality, Best Team Players, and Academic Excellence Award for highest GPA average. Congratulations to our IWA Impact Dance Team!

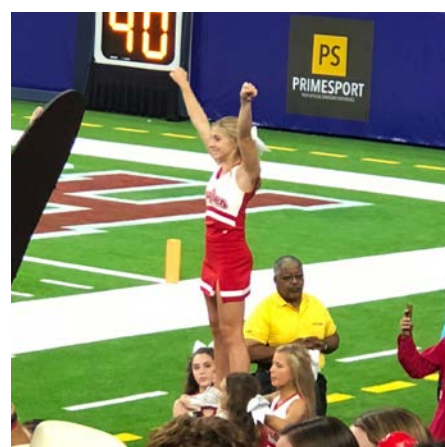


PERFORMANCES AT NRG FOR STRAKE-STHS GAME

It was a Catholic school takeover at NRG Stadium for the Private High School Kickoff Classic between Strake Jesuit and St. Thomas High School at the start of the school year. Despite IWA's lack of a football program, the girls of Incarnate Word Academy were notable participants and brought much talent and spirit to the evening. Along with the St. Thomas High School Singers, the Incarnate Word Academy choir kicked off the evening at the 50-yard line with a rousing rendition of the National Anthem. Halftime boasted



Above Left: Kathryn Koerner '22 and Kathryn Conti '22 take a break from playing for the packed stadium of NRG.



Above Right: Allison Mercier '21 helps lift Joelle Alvarez '21 as she leads the crowd in rooting for the STHS Eagles.

performances by the IWA and St. Thomas Band as well as a the traditional goodwill collaboration with the Strake Band. Senior Alyssa Caver '19 led the band in their

halftime performance and, though she kept her cool in the spotlight admitted after the show that, "It was a bit surreal to see the size of the stadium from the field!"

ALUMNAE

SPRING ALUMNAE LUNCHEON

Women of the Word from as early as 1948 to as recent as the Class of 2012 gathered at the Junior League of Houston on February 16, 2019 for the annual Spring Alumnae Luncheon.

This year, the Academy honored Betty Ann Martin Kowis '53 and Lanette Kowis '88 for their love, leadership and commitment to Incarnate Word Academy and the greater Houston community.

More than 150 alumnae and friends gathered to celebrate the IWA sisterhood and the dynamic mother-daughter duo. On behalf of the Academy, school president Sister Lauren Beck, C.V.I., Olivia Green '20 and Carmel Tajonera '08 thanked alumnae for blazing the trail for future Women of the Word and for their continued support of IWA.

The afternoon closed out with alumnae singing the alma mater together and class photo shoots. A wonderful time was had by all and we are looking forward to doing it again next year!





A NOTE FROM THE HONOREES

"We would like to thank everyone who was able to attend the Spring Alumnae Luncheon. It was great seeing so many friends and classmates—some of whom we haven't seen since graduation! IWA holds such a special place in our hearts and we know it does in yours, too. We pray that God will continue to bless the school and that IWA will be able to educate and send forth so many more wonderful Women of the Word!"

—Betty Ann Martin Kowis '53 and Lanette Kowis '88

CAREER DAY 2019

Incarnate Word Academy welcomed nine alumnae to its annual Career Day in February. Each alumna, along with other participants from the Houston community, shared about their professional experiences and journeys after IWA.

We would love to have 100% alumnae speakers at Career Day! If you are interested in participating in next year's IWA Career Day, please send us a note at alumnae@incarnateword.org.



Pictured left to right: Casey Scott '11, Registrar and teacher, Incarnate Word Academy; Gin Braverman '96, Founder & Creative Director, Gin Design Group; Cristina Flores '10, Digital Marketing Coordinator, Houston Dynamo & Dash; Erika DeLaRosa '11, English Teacher/Department Chair, Baylor College of Medicine Biotech Academy at Rusk; Franceska McCaughan Ostermann '06, Founder & Artistic Director, Franzie's Flower Design; Domenica Delgado '11, Program Project Manager, Center for Health & Nature/Methodist Hospital; Jada Davis '10, Senior Associate/Mechanical Engineer, Alliantgroup; Christina Garcia-Ramirez, DPT '07, Physical Therapist, Hope Physical Therapy & Aquatics; Michelle Roy '13, Contract Specialist, Shell; Jamie Roy '11, Marketing Specialist, Utegration; Carmel Tajonera '08, Alumnae Relations and Annual Fund Coordinator, Incarnate Word Academy

2019 IWA ALUMNAE DECADE CHALLENGE

IWA gave us the opportunity to dream. To achieve. To lead. To serve. Now it is our turn to give that opportunity to all of the young women at the Academy today by giving to the IWA Annual Fund. Your gift directly and immediately supports every student who walks the halls of 609 Crawford.

The Decade Challenge is a friendly competition between decades for the highest participation and amount given to IWA. Bragging rights go to the highest decade participation in overall giving and highest amount raised towards the IWA Annual Fund. Thank you for your commitment to the growth of our current and future Women of the Word, and the education and programs that support them!

Join the challenge and give today!

www.incarnateword.org/decadechallenge



CLASS NOTES

1948

THE CLASS OF 1948 (1)

gathered on January 31, 2019 to celebrate their 71st class reunion on at Patrenella's Italian Restaurant. Pictured: Dolores Pontius Thomas, Mary Ann Valouch Weishaupt, Sr. Jean Marie (Jo Ann) Guokas, C.V.I., Patricia Gibson Huebner, Angelina Bolcerek Heinrich, Mitzi Pool Bridges

1958

THE CLASS OF 1958 (2)

gathered to celebrate their 60th class reunion at Spanish Flowers Restaurant. Pictured: (Back row) Louise Didion Hemenway, Betty Hidalgo, Margaret Penn Strmiska, Alice Reed Ward, Sofie Szymanski Tilotta, Lucille Matthes Jetter, Mary Pat Hoge Schifani, Dorothy Cegielski Painter, Seraphine Brotherton Kolar, Mary Ann Bravenec Zimmerman, Irene Brotherton Morello, Sr. Mary Margaret Rosberg, C.V.I. (Front row) Brucelle Kirtley, Sally Fowler Bayard, Billie Conner Nowak, Frances Jo Ligitino Flaherty, Charlene Schiro Guilliams, Mary Louise Guillory, Sr. Jean Marie Guokas, C.V.I. '48

1977

JILL BENGGE (3)

currently has 14 grandchildren (seven boys and seven girls) and one due in July. She still works at Quilts, Inc. and enjoys riding her 2003 Harley Davidson.

1985

RHETTA ANDREWS BOWERS (4)

is a newly-elected member of the Texas House of Representatives, serving District 113 in Dallas County. She has been appointed to serve on three committees by Speaker Dennis Bonnen: Corrections, Juvenile Justice and Family Issues, and Local and Consent Calendars.

1988

SANDRA VASQUEZ BRANDIN

and husband Richard C. Brandin celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary. In the oil and gas industry for 20 years, Sandra currently works in The Woodland, Texas as a Sr. Division Order & Lease Analyst. Sandra is in her third year as a member of the Board of Directors for the Houston Association for Division Order Analysts (HADOA) in which she currently serves as Employment Networking Director. She and her husband plan to take a trip to Spain and/or Rome this year!

1994

AMY SALMERON

wed Joshua Perrella of The Woodlands, Texas in October 2017.

1999

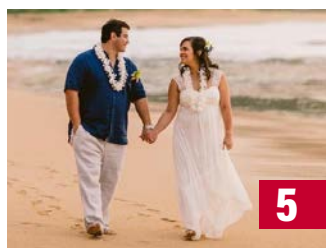
DANIELLE GREGORY (5)

wed Chris Melendez on April 10, 2018 at Tunnels Beach, Kauai, Hawaii. The couple welcomed their second child, daughter Ava Elise Melendez on August 30, 2018.

2002

VIVIAN HERNANDEZ GRAHAM (6)

welcomed a daughter, Elizabeth Joan Graham on August 30, 2018. Elizabeth joins big brother, Braden who is 3.5 years old. Vivian lives in San Antonio with her husband and children, and is a Human Resources Specialist with Circle K.





7



8



9



10

CENTER STAGE THROWBACK!

We were delighted to receive this photo of the cast from the 2004 production of *Nunsense* at IWA! If you have fun "throwback" photos of your days at IWA you'd like to share, please send them to alumnae@incarnateword.org.



11



12

**ASHLEY HOLUBEC CHAMBERS (7)**

works at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in the veterinary medicine and surgery department. Happily married to a St. Thomas High School alumnus, the couple has three boys and welcomed baby Atlas on Dec. 3, 2018.

2005**MARITZA MARTINEZ (8)**

wed Nevin D. Wardrop on November 10, 2018 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in Cancun, Mexico.

2007**BRITTANY REVIA DE GARCÍA**

teaches sixth grade English and Medieval History at Aristoi Classical Academy, a classical charter school in Katy, Texas.

2011**PATRICIA SASS JACKSON (9)**

and husband Lincoln Jackson live in Alexandria, Virginia with their 3-year old puppy. Patricia, a cardiac ICU nurse, and Lincoln, currently serving in the Air Force, enjoy living around so much history and cannot wait for their next adventure.

2013**KAY COLEMAN (10)**

wed Austin Darrow on December 28, 2018 in Spring, Texas. The pair met at the University of Texas at Austin and became friends during their freshman year. Many of Kay's IWA sisters joined to celebrate the couple at their wedding!

2014**LISA PEREZ (11)**

graduated from the University of Houston in December 2018, where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from the UH Second Degree BSN program. She earned her nursing license in January and now works at HCA Houston Healthcare Clear Lake.

2015**ASHLEY BELL (12)**

graduated from Texas A&M University in December 2018 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science and a minor in business.

KAITLYN PENA (13)

graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in December 2018 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Relations. During her final semester, Kaitlyn served as a research scholar for the University's Media Ethics Initiative program, a part of the UT Center for Media Engagement. Following graduation, Kaitlyn moved back to Houston and began working on a Texas state representative campaign.

2017**ANGELIQUE LONGOBARDI (14)**

was nominated "Warrior of the Week" at Hendrix College for excellence in athletics and academics. Angelique broke the 50m butterfly record at her school with a time of 00:27:81.

**IN MEMORIAM**

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Pat Lowth Hubbard '53
Linda Riddell Kuranoff '64
Josephine Porras Lara '54
Gina Schulte McCain '76

Constance "Teana" Sechelski '48
Anna Marie Lojo Teltschik '58
Johanna Briseño Thomas '62



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