

ST. URSULA ACADEMY

2020

STRATEGIC PLAN

*MAKING A
DIFFERENCE*



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, St. Ursula Academy's Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees embarked on its 2020 strategic visioning process. During the next six months, these groups sought and received the input and perspectives of more than 850 SUA constituents, including current parents, alumnae, faculty, and staff, to help chart the course for the next three to five years.

Even accounting for the pandemic's current impact, SUA's 2020 Strategic Plan builds on its past successes, recognizes present challenges, and prepares the school for the future. In summary, the Board and the leadership team have listened and applied the feedback received to reflect the strategies and action steps that will take St. Ursula Academy to new heights of excellence. It is also a document that will continue to evolve throughout the coming years as SUA responds to new challenges and opportunities.

SUA's Mission Statement articulates its purpose: to make a difference in the world by preparing each young woman for college and for a life of meaning. ***Making a Difference*** is the foundation for SUA's 2020 Strategic Plan. Linking the 2020 Strategic Plan to SUA's Mission is integral to charting a path forward.

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OUR MISSION

Founded in the Ursuline tradition and rooted in the Catholic faith, St. Ursula Academy educates each young woman, transforming her through **intellectual inquiry, personal growth, spiritual formation, and compassionate service**, empowering her to **lead confidently in a global society**.

As such, SUA's **2020 Strategic Plan: *Making a Difference*** is structured around the five key, interconnected elements of its Mission.

....transformation of each young woman through:

INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY

PERSONAL GROWTH

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND
COMPASSIONATE SERVICE**

LEADERSHIP IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

URSULINE COMMUNITY



INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY -----

MISSION CONNECTION

INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY

COMMITMENT:

SUA provides a strong, dynamic, and well-integrated 21st Century curriculum that challenges each student to independent critical thinking, problem solving, love of learning, and the pursuit of excellence, preparing her for a global society.

VISION:

SUA is the recognized market leader in college preparatory education for young women.

CORE VALUE: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Multi-faceted college-preparatory curricula, combined with adaptable instructional practices, promotes critical thinking, creative expression, and academic mastery while inspiring intellectual curiosity and growth.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY:

Attract, hire, and retain the most talented, diverse, and mission-congruent faculty.

ACTION STEPS:

- Expand the number of faculty and staff that reflect Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) representation, advanced degrees, licensures, alumnae status, and experience levels in new faculty/staff hires through broadening the use of People of Color job boards, job fairs, and the like, to promote all open positions.
- Continue to focus on closing the gap between SUA's compensation base and other schools in the region.

STRATEGY:

Consistently renew SUA's curriculum, relying on purposeful dialogue with and among faculty and with educational leaders outside the school.

ACTION STEPS:

- Continually explore new program/curricular initiatives that maximize latest industry trends and best practices aligned with core values.
- Review and expand the current curriculum to include Black, Latinx, and Native American history and literature, as well as highlight and celebrate BIPOC women and other leaders.
- Increase the depth and breadth of SUA's "Women In" series.
- Continue use of annual parent satisfaction survey to provide feedback for learning and growth.



STRATEGY:

Provide meaningful professional development programs that encourage and support the faculty's continuous improvement and teaching excellence.

ACTION STEPS:

- Continue to promote and encourage professional development attendance and require sharing of learning with faculty/staff cohort.
- Consider financial or professional development awards for faculty who are recognized and excel, both within and beyond the SUA community.
- Identify, define, and develop the skills needed to create classroom environments and curricula in which multiple perspectives and experiences, as well as a broad diversity of people, are represented.

STRATEGY:

Provide tools and support for faculty to excel at their profession, fostering collaborative and supportive relationships that build mutual trust.

ACTION STEP:

Establish an annual process for faculty/staff culture evaluation to provide feedback to leadership.

STRATEGY:

Develop a long-term technology master plan that considers appropriate and effective roles for new instructional and learning modes supported by technology.

ACTION STEP:

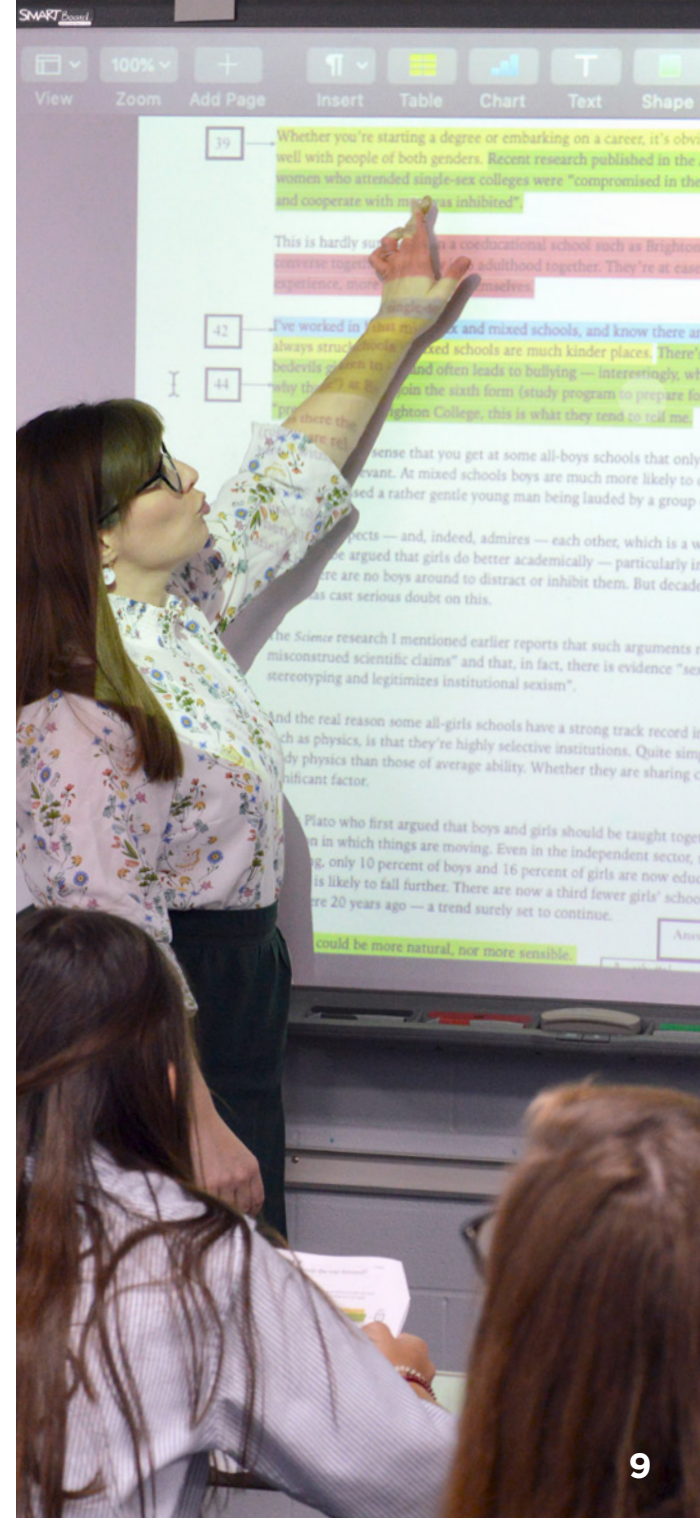
Complete a comprehensive long-term technology plan that takes into consideration experience gained during 2020 Home Learning.

STRATEGY:

Provide training to faculty, staff, students, and parents to effectively use new technology tools.

ACTION STEP:

Continue to develop Technology training programs for faculty, staff, students, and parents.





PERSONAL GROWTH

MISSION CONNECTION

PERSONAL GROWTH

COMMITMENT:

SUA develops the whole person in mind, body, heart, and spirit to enable each student, as well as faculty and staff members, to respect the dignity of every human being and maximize their unique and full potential.

VISION:

At SUA, every person feels supported and safe in a nurturing environment that promotes spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and academic development and well-being.

CORE VALUE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE PERSON

Spiritual, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and emotional development is achieved through a broad range of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities.

Moral fortitude, self-discipline, and perseverance are integral to developing the whole person.

A supportive, faith-based environment with committed faculty and staff enhances and guides each student's development.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY:

Focus on developing character traits that track with success, such as persistence, resilience, wellness, self-discipline, and respect for others.

ACTION STEP:

Expand student/faculty/staff programming related to personal and physical growth and well-being.

STRATEGY:

Foster an environment of friendship, mutual acceptance, respect, and concern for one another that affirms the self-worth and dignity of each person.

ACTION STEPS:

- Establish a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion standing committee of the Board of Trustees to direct the strategic efforts of all diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Assess the social/cultural climate of the school as it relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including implicit bias testing that informs diversity, equity, and inclusion action planning.
- With the input of the social/cultural assessment, design and implement an annual mandatory diversity, equity, and inclusion training experience to raise awareness and promote anti-racism throughout the SUA community, including students, faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees.
- Establish a Diversity Advisory Committee of students, faculty, staff, counselors, and campus ministers to create effective actions and solutions to support anti-racism efforts.
- Provide skill development in minority issues to school counselors to support BIPOC students.
- Become a more intentionally diverse teaching and learning community by expanding the cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic background of the faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees through actively recruiting diverse candidates to fill open faculty, staff, and Board positions.



STRATEGY:

Continue to deepen and expand college counseling and the College Quest program to enable students to be more engaged and prepared in selecting their unique “best fit” college.

ACTION STEP:

Continue to deliver the annual College Quest Program, assessing effectiveness with current students and alumnae.

STRATEGY:

Evaluate and invigorate student life programs, such as clubs and Arrows Listening to Arrows (ALTA), that integrate students’ academic, social, and emotional development, including training and preparing adult advisors to guide their students most effectively.

ACTION STEP:

Evaluate the effectiveness of the ALTA program and provide training and development of adult advisors to provide the most effective advisory program.

STRATEGY:

Develop and implement an updated plan and process for maintaining high community standards.

ACTION STEP:

Enhance general skills development programs—such as public speaking, interviewing, eye contact, and email etiquette—whether through the “Leading Self” course, high school and/or Junior Academy curriculum, or other modes of training.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICE -----

SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

COMMITMENT:

SUA provides an environment that inspires all to deepen their relationship with God and serve others.

VISION:

SUA's legacy is its community living and sharing the vision of Christ through the life of St. Angela Merici.

CORE VALUES:

SERVICE

Compassionate service and reflection are integral to SUA's faith and to each student's engagement in a global society, preparing her to be an ethical, engaged, and socially conscious citizen.

URSULINE SPIRITUALITY

The purpose of Catholic education is to honor the past, while preparing each young woman for the present, the future, and eternity in mind, body, heart, and spirit.

SUA believes in providing an environment in which students, faculty, staff, and all constituents are inspired to build and deepen their relationship with God.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY:

Continue to integrate SUA's Catholic culture and identity into all aspects of the SUA experience through meaningful Campus Ministry, Christian Service, and Theology programs, ultimately providing an opportunity for each student, faculty member, and staff member to further deepen his or her personal spirituality.

ACTION STEPS:

- Develop an action plan to increase engagement by students, faculty members, and staff members in liturgy, morning prayer, Labre, and other service offerings, as well as to increase the understanding of the elements of the Catholic faith, including the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching and anti-racism.
- Expand the Christian Service program to teach students about community service and provide meaningful service opportunities for all.
- Provide education for faculty and staff members (Catholic and non-Catholic) on the tenets of the Catholic faith to promote dialogue, understanding, and alignment with SUA's Mission.
- Add diversity to liturgies, including reflections of Black and Latinx Catholic traditions.

STRATEGY:

Continue integrating Catholic Catechesis and Catholic Identity throughout the curriculum through the lens of the Ursuline Core Values.

ACTION STEP:

Continued focus by the Theology Department on improved Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education (ACRE) scores that reflect student knowledge of the Catholic faith.



LEADERSHIP IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY-----

MISSION CONNECTION

LEADERSHIP IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

COMMITMENT:

SUA develops the leadership skills, emotional intelligence, personal integrity, cultural intelligence, and global perspectives of students, faculty, and staff.

VISION:

SUA develops and empowers leaders who will change the world.

CORE VALUE: LEADERSHIP

A single-sex environment develops confident, courageous, self-directed leaders who are prepared for this complex and continually changing world.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY:

Integrate leadership theory, emotional intelligence, and cultural intelligence throughout the SUA community.

ACTION STEP:

Continue to examine opportunities to develop leadership, emotional intelligence, and cultural intelligence in students, faculty, and staff.

STRATEGY:

Expand connection of current students with alumnae and other community leaders through a comprehensive program of events and speakers that provides students with enriched perspectives and relevant real-world learning experiences.

ACTION STEP:

Use alumnae affinity groups to increase outreach to and representation of all alumnae, including Black alumnae, as role models to students.

STRATEGY:

Strengthen the bonds with Ursuline schools worldwide and deepen partnerships that promote global citizenship.

ACTION STEP:

Focus on increasing connections beyond Ursuline Education Network's Summer Leadership Institute to Ursuline schools throughout the world.



URSULINE COMMUNITY

MISSION CONNECTION

URSULINE COMMUNITY

COMMITMENT:

Each member of the SUA community, including students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumnae, contributes to fulfilling SUA's mission through building and sustaining connections, engagement, and philanthropic support.

VISION:

SUA provides students, their families, faculty and staff members, alumnae, and others with a unique and fulfilling opportunity to learn, work, and give back.

CORE VALUE: COMMUNITY

A trusting and nurturing community, dedicated to living the common mission, leads to building individuals who can encourage and learn from one another.

SUA believes in celebrating traditions with past, present, and future community members in the spirit of St. Angela Merici's enduring vision of togetherness.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY:

Attract, recruit, and enroll a diverse student body.

ACTION STEPS:

- Design an innovative recruitment program, including marketing, social media, and internal and external communication efforts, that welcomes prospective students to SUA beyond the annual Visitation and Open House opportunities.
- Connect with leaders and alumnae in the Black, Latinx, and other underrepresented communities to explore recruitment efforts to serve more diverse populations.
- Continue to connect with younger students through summer camps and after-school programs.
- Examine the possibility of offering transportation to underserved populations.

STRATEGY:

Create a culture of philanthropy that provides alumnae, donors, families, faculty members, and staff members with fulfilling opportunities to support SUA's mission.

ACTION STEPS:

- Leverage the efforts of the Advancement team, and the broader SUA community, to engage more deeply with alumnae to support young women.
- Focus on increasing membership growth in SUA's *1854 Society* planned giving society.
- Continue focused efforts on raising funds to support scholarships and financial aid.
- Through alumnae engagement efforts, increase attendance at alumnae gatherings throughout the country, as well as participation on social media platforms and LinkedIn, to share SUA's and alumnae's stories.

STRATEGY:

Begin thoughtful and deliberate succession planning for key positions.

ACTION STEP:

Assess various position needs for the next three years, including planning for retirement for key leaders, as well the needs identified in efforts to promote a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture.

STRATEGY:

Assess and evaluate tuition models to make SUA affordable to the broadest representation of families in the market.

ACTION STEPS:

- Study current financial aid offerings to ascertain opportunities for meeting increased need.
- Continue to study SUA's organizational cost structure to ensure that each dollar is purposely spent and necessary to achieve the mission of SUA.



ST. URSULA ACADEMY

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