



StudentPrints

44 East 68th Street New York, NY 10065

www.dominicanacademy.org

Ignatian Family Teach-In *Julia Ayroso, Evangelina Boutsikakis*

Four seniors and their Campus Minister, Ms. McCann, took part in the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice in Washington, D.C on a weekend in mid-November. IFTJ is an annual gathering coordinated by the Ignatian Solidarity Network that brings together Jesuit colleges, high schools, parishes, and other partners to “learn, reflect, pray, network, and advocate together.” IFTJ is rooted in honoring the Jesuits and their companions, who were martyred in El Salvador in 1989.

This year’s theme was “Radical Hope, Prophetic Action.” The two main advocacy issues for this year’s conference were environmental justice



Left to right:

J. Ayroso, B. Valentin, Ms. McCann,
E. Boutsikakis, M. Mayer

and humane migration reform. Keynote speakers shared personal stories and informative presentations regarding these topics. Additionally, all students were invited to participate in breakout sessions, each centered around a specific injustice. Some of the breakout sessions our students attended were “Welcoming and Respecting LGBT Catholics in our Parishes,” “Microaggressions in American Classrooms: Little Things That Matter,” and “Seeking Refuge at the U.S. -Mexico Border: Stories of Asylum Seekers.” As we attended these breakout sessions, we became more aware of the realities of the social injustices that fill our world, and we were called to nonviolent action. Our collective passions for justice were deepened during these three impactful days.

The night before the public witness and each district’s respective senate meetings, all 1500-plus individuals gathered for mass. We honored the lives of those who were martyred in El Salvador and shone a light onto the path they forged for many to come. This mass beautifully complemented the candlelight prayer held in respect for the Jesuit martyrs; during this time, each individual’s name was read and projected onto the screen as students, clergymen, and other leaders, held candles around the room signifying each life given in the pursuit of justice. Mass was a time of spiritual connection and reflection for the many faithful individuals that attended. The energy that filled the Arlington Ballroom that night was one of the most uplifting and wholesome experiences we have had the opportunity to share.

On Advocacy Day, we started the morning by gathering at Columbus Circle, Union Station. Together we participated

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Pre-Med Club

Christina Garcia

Dominican Academy provides many opportunities to enrich the academic interests of students. It offers electives, extracurriculars, and clubs to nurture our passions and intellectual pursuits. The Pre-Med Society is one such club.

Since its inception two years ago, it has seen its membership triple from 30 to 90. The club was the brainchild of Julia Ayroso and Samantha DeMaria who as sophomores were inspired to create it after attending the Envision High School Medical Summer Program. The commitment of these two co-founders with the guidance of Dr. Lauren Serpagli has made the club what it is today - a sisterhood where like-minded individuals meet to share and promote their interest in the field of medicine. The mission of the club is to provide an outlet for students with the same passion for medicine to dive deeper through student led lectures, hands on activities, and guest lecturers. The club puts on display the students’ ingenuity, critical thinking, and passion for the field.

The Pre-Med Club usually meets every other Thursday, right after classes end. Girls arrive in waves, some rushing from their last classes immediately to get to the lab on time and others slowly ambling into the room already having gotten their jackets. However, as soon as you step into the lab, the atmosphere changes. The room feels more exciting than it should be on a slow Thursday afternoon. Every time we meet, there is a new interesting topic for our activity and discussion. It is a place where ideas are welcome from all girls, freshmen to seniors.

During our meetings, we take an in-depth look into topics that will follow us throughout our medical careers. During Pre-Med’s first meet, we discussed the Hippocratic Oath which is a sacred vow of ethics taken by physicians in their practice of healing the bodies of those ailing. The oath represents all that physicians must strive to uphold in their practice. After learning what the oath is and what it stands for, we had a dialogue comparing the ethics versus legality of

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Ignatian Family Teach-In *continued from page 1*

in the Public Witness to bring awareness to the injustices we've been learning about all weekend.

The night before, together as a team, we strengthened our understanding of environmental justice and took that information to Senator Gillibrand's office. Even though we met with her representatives, we can all say being in the Senate building, advocating for what we believe in, was an experience we'll never forget.

We want to extend our deepest gratitude to Ms. McCann, as she led us with an immense sense of trust, awareness, and compassion as we took part in this year's Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice.

We were inspired by the many voices that filled the space that weekend and will continue to hold the lessons they taught us in our hearts as we grow in our passions for social justice. Speakers such as Sr. Peggy O'Neill, Joanna Williams, Chloe Becker, and more empowered our students as they represented strong women, especially in faith. IFTJ gave us a chance to fully experience what we've learned in the classroom, and apply them to our lives in a concrete, fulfilling way.

Metropolitan Museum of Art *Catie Mohan*

The sophomores recently went on a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where they had to compete in a scavenger hunt - in Latin. When we were first told about the scavenger hunt and the language it was written in, some of us were nervous about completing this task. But once we were at the museum it turned out to be surprisingly enjoyable.

Each clue in the scavenger hunt was written from the point of view of the artwork we had to locate in the museum's galleries. Each statue or painting gave us clues about themselves (what they wore, who their family members were, etc.) in Latin. To find each item, we had to translate the Latin, then figure out whom the quote was describing. A statue of Athena gave us the hint, "Nata sum ex patris capite, sed meum caput amittitur. Gerro caput Medusae in pectore. Quid est mihi nomen?"

Once we arrived at the museum, my group quickly translated our clues. We first went to find a mural from the house of an ancient Roman that depicted Polyphemus and Galatea.

We then found statues of Cupid in eternal sleep and Persephone playing

with a deer. After finding all the art in that wing, we frantically looked for a Hebrew urn that would give us extra credit on our test.

We next moved to the more modern section of our scavenger hunt, the art of the Impressionists. Here, there were many paintings inspired by the myths of the Greeks and Romans. Oedipus was solving the Sphinx's "unsolvable riddle," while Pandora was opening her forbidden box.

The last part of our hunt was to find the painting of Washington Crossing the "flumen Delawarium." In the American Wing, the busts of our former presidents clearly reflected the style of those of ancient Roman leaders.

This trip not only allowed us to learn more about art, but it also allowed us to use Latin outside the classroom. We were able to connect with the language by being surrounded by objects that were created when it was spoken. Instead of being worried about what conjugation and tense the Romans had written in, we were able to see the long-lasting influence they had on our culture.

Pre-Med Club *continued from page 1*

certain medical cases. We discussed the ethics and legality of prescribing pain medication to a woman in severe pain and has dementia, whose Health Care Proxy (HCP) refuses it for the patient. We deliberated on how a physician should navigate the dilemma of complying with their underage 17-year-old patient's wishes for privacy from her parents, despite her life being placed in danger due to requiring emergency C section. What about real life medical cases? We mulled over the Chicago Tylenol Murders that occurred from September to October 1982. The cases would not have been solved if not for the scrutiny of various medical files. Consequently, pharmaceutical companies

including Tylenol started using tamper proof pill bottles, safety measures which are commonplace today. This is just a taste of the thought-provoking, heart wrenching, and challenging situations that physicians face every day. These situations illustrate that medicine is not limited to the science of healing but to the many living facets of human existence.

This is the exciting field of medicine. It challenges every individual to her very core. It is not just a chosen career, but a vocation. It is a call to action, to save lives. It is truly a chance to change the world. If you hear the call, take a leap of faith and join this freshman and her new colleagues in the DA medical sisterhood.

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UN Political Forum *Kiara Ortiz*

This summer, two friends from Model G20 and I attended the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) as official guests of the Japan Y20 delegation and observers with the UN Major Group for Children and Youth. While this trip was initially planned as a week-long summer reunion in New York City, it escalated to another foray into international relations when we discovered that the HLPF was being held only a subway ride away from our lodgings.

Held over two weeks at the UN Headquarters and various nearby embassies, the HLPF is an annual forum for ambassadors, leaders of non-governmental organizations, young activists, and other global stakeholders to review progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals and discuss improvements. The Sustainable Development Goals (commonly abbreviated to SDGs) are a set of 17 ambitious global goals set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 for completion by 2030. We attended numerous events throughout the conference and were invited into the UN Headquarters on two days to collaborate with the UN Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) on policy papers pertaining to quality education (SDG 4), good jobs and economic growth (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG10), climate action (SDG 13), and peace and justice (SDG16). We gave input as past teenage youth representatives at the Y20 (the official youth group to the G20) and pushed for the inclusion of policy recommendations from our 2018 and 2019 Task Force position papers.

As official guests of the Y20 Japanese Delegation, we observed a presentation of the Japanese Agenda at the UN. At this event, Japanese representatives presented how they would achieve the



Kirar Ortiz

SDGs and their plans for future cooperation. A high princess from Saudi Arabia also spoke and presented the goals of the G20 to be held in Saudi Arabia in 2020 as well as their relation to previous summits. All of the speakers highlighted many positive aspects of sustainability and various ways to improve.

Furthermore, we attended a panel on civic spaces for climate justice and equality, held at the Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice. The speakers consisted of civil society leaders on the front lines of implementing the SDGs around the world who gave riveting presentations on the principles of climate justice and youth climate activism, the importance of including NGOs and civil organizations in government decision-making, and even the role of social media in electoral politics

from India to the United States.

I found the HLPF's motivation—particularly among the hundreds of youth representatives present—to achieve the SDGs inspiring, but I believed the most eye-opening event was the Ground Level People's Forum (GLPF). This forum truly engaged with civil society and was held not at the UN, but the People's Forum on the Lower West Side of New York. The forum's atmosphere of cultural engagement and emphasis on including minorities and indigenous peoples put global struggles into a new perspective. While the HLPF focused on achieving the SDGs on a broader scale, the GLPF was concerned with regional economic disparities and demanded concrete action plans during their protest march to the UN. I joined the working group on education and presented on the importance of increasing the quality of education through a more balanced distribution of wealth within countries.

This senior is thankful to have attended the HLPF and explored her passions of policy-making and international relations.

Being Bilingual *Nicole Belyy*

Do you speak a second language? If you do, you will know that there are moments when you choose to speak in one or the other, depending on what the situation is and to whom you are speaking. However, I must admit, there are times when I slip up and say bless you in Russian to my English-speaking friends.

Being raised in a family of Belorussian immigrants, I have grown up speaking both Russian and English fluently. Being bilingual has enabled me to understand myself and Russian culture better. Being bilingual influences the way I think and speak in both languages. Often, I find myself trying to find the perfect word to use in an essay, and I think of a Russian word. Likewise, when speaking Russian, I will use English grammatical rules out of habit.

Understanding another society's music, literature, art, customs, and traditions, has enriched my life. Watching old Soviet movies, celebrating New Year's Day with my grandparents, eating pelmeni, and singing Russian folk songs are all ways I relate to my

heritage. Also, with this ability, I can easily communicate with my predominantly Russian-speaking relatives and stay connected with them.

Going through the process of trying to master Russian's complicated grammar system has also given me a higher level of empathy for those trying to learn another language. With all the vocabulary and rules to memorize, learning a language is no easy feat. But I would still encourage everyone to learn another language. There are numerous benefits to being multilingual, such as better performance in school, increased creativity, and a more impressive resume.

Although I was born and raised in the United States, and my native language is English, I am also a Russian speaker, who will forever have a connection to her origins.

Goodbye, or до свидания!

Museum of Natural History *Marie Ryan*

October 22nd marked the date that freshmen were together for a total of 211 hours, 12,660 minutes, and 759,600 seconds. We were all getting along, making friends, and settling in. However, we had all done this in a controlled environment: school. We have gotten to know each other by acclimating ourselves to classmates in our section or homeroom, who we chose to sit next to, or who we happened to sit next to at lunch on the first day. All of that changed when the whole grade ventured out into the real world, walking from school through Central Park to spend a day at the Museum of Natural History.

We put ourselves into groups quickly, which was interesting because we ended up with whoever was within our closest proximity. This gave us more of an opportunity to talk to and learn new things about people that you would only learn when you are outside your familiar surroundings and comfort zones. For example, we learned, "Who will actually go out of their way to step on the crunchiest leaves?" and "Who

will actually try to run across the street with two seconds left on the light?"

Besides getting to know each other better, traveling to the museum also made us feel connected in another way. When we are in school, we are all DA students wearing the same clothes and going to the same school. When we are outside in the city, however, we are not surrounded by people we have so much in common with. It gives even newly minted freshmen students a feeling of school spirit to march through Central Park, an army of blue, green, and white in our uniforms.

Upon arriving at the Museum of Natural History, we started our mission. Dr. Serpagli had been prepping us all week on what we were going to be doing in the museum. We had to locate the exhibits she specified on a worksheet and answer questions about them. We also took photos of the displays, which resulted in some amusing group photos we can keep to remind ourselves about the day.

Most of the items proved easy enough to find once we learned how to

navigate the building. Some were more challenging, such as searching for the saber-toothed tiger in a room full of animal skeletons. After completing the scavenger hunt, we ate lunch, which was somewhat enjoyable but which was significantly improved upon by the discovery of a vending machine with ice cream and candy. The last task of the day was a visit the museum gift shop full of stuffed animals and dried space food. Needless to say, it was one of the highlights of the day.

In retrospect, the trip was perfectly timed so that the freshmen could use the day to get to know each other better, without it being too awkward because we barely knew each other. The whole experience really made this freshman feel like the whole class finally connected and that we were one big team and a real unit of the Dominican Academy family. There is something about running through the dark halls of a museum looking for an animal that resembles the axolotl Taco living in the DA lab that really bonds people together.

Valor Club *Brianna Cordero*

On December 14, 2018, I was standing in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral with my father. Before that day, the only connection I felt to the military was through my dad, who served in the Navy. I celebrated all the big holidays that commemorate our military and veterans as many people do...by posting a picture on Instagram. But standing in front of old St. Patrick's Cathedral, that all changed.

December 14th is when Wreaths Across America is celebrated. It is when people get together and place wreaths on the tombstones of veterans. On that day in 2018, I got the chance to take part in this event and was shocked by how much it affected me. I cried as someone sang "America the Beautiful," and when I placed a wreath on a nameless tombstone, I felt so touched and lucky to be able to take

part in such a beautiful tradition.

This is when I got the idea for Valor, an idea for a club that was inspired by the fact that I was able to take part in this event, because of a resource group at my father's job that had the same name and purpose. The resource group gave me the chance to gain a new perspective about the military and to take part in such an amazing event, and I knew that I wanted everyone at DA to have the same opportunity.

The true purpose of Valor Club is not only to commemorate the great sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform, but also to keep all of us informed about the important days that are made to commemorate those people and their sacrifices, as well as about what we can do to show our respect and gratitude for them. So far, as you may have noticed

from scrolling through your inbox, we have made a point to send out emails to the student body in order for all to learn more and show your gratitude with us. It is our goal to continue to do this, as well as to take part in events, such as Wreaths Across America, so that we can show our gratitude and respect as a whole outside of DA.

We are all grateful for the support we have been shown by many people. We are especially grateful for the kind support of Mrs. Fannon, who took time out of her day to give us a wonderful and educational presentation at our last meeting about D-Day and her emotional trip to Normandy.

I am proud to be the president of Valor Club, and I am grateful for all the support that has been given to my colleagues in the club.

NHS Induction *Anna Hartmann, Rachel Hartmann*

On September 30, 2019, 46 students from the DA Class of 2020 were inducted into the Marian Chapter of the National Honor Society. A stream of girls in blazers marched out of Dominican Academy and down the streets of New York City with excitement. The ceremony took place at the Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer on Lexington Avenue at 66th Street surrounded by family, friends, and the entire DA community.

National Honor Society is a nationwide organization for high school students in the United States. The organization “serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character.” Recipients were selected based on the demonstration of these four qualities through an application process. Membership in an NHS chapter does not only give recognition to recipients for their accomplishments but also challenges them to develop further through active involvement both in and outside of their school community. At Dominican Academy, two of the key responsibilities NHS members hold are serving as school tour guides and peer-tutors.

The induction ceremony included a candle lighting while the names of the inductees were read aloud and speeches made by this year’s NHS executive board on the four pillars of NHS: Julia Ayroso (President), Monica Sullivan (Vice-President), Samantha DeMaria (Treasurer), and Meghan Drew (Secretary). One of the most special moments during the ceremony was a beautiful speech made by guest speaker, Claire Callahan, a DA alum five years ago who graduated *magnum cum laude*



Left to right: C. Dell’Olio, A. Wang, A. Hartmann, R. Hartmann

from NYU before winning a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship to teach English in South Korea this past year. During her speech, Claire directly addressed the inductees and told them, “Knowledge is powerful in that you learn and grow with it. It is transformative.” She reflected on her time at DA, the importance of doing things that scare you, and how DA remains with you even after you graduate. Claire also spoke about her classmate and very close friend, Natalie Frankowski, who exemplified the four pillars of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. She stated that Natalie is an individual that new NHS members can look up to as a role model and how members have a special responsibility to uphold the pillars just as Natalie did. The ceremony ended with inspiring closing remarks from both DA President, Sr. Margaret Ormond and, DA Principal, Dr. Leslie Petit.

A huge thank you to Dr. Serpagli and Ms. Reardon for not only leading the NHS chapter at DA but for all the work you do to make it possible. Congratulations to the new members of NHS!

Shakespeare Competition *Grace Marks*

The Shakespeare Competition took its annual place in school activities during the first week of December. Students performed monologues from the plays of William Shakespeare under the guidance of their English instructor Ms. Somboonchoke. Each student recited her

own monologue up on the auditorium stage to an audience of students, parents, and faculty as well as a panel of three impartial judges who were Ms. Metzler, Sr. Joan Franks, and Ms. Dufresne.

However, this competition was not just a matter of “memorizing” brief

monologues and speeches. Competitors had to consider who the characters were talking to through their use of body language, pronunciation, and a variety of other variables.

Everyone performed well. But three students were given special notice for their effort. Charlotte Ainsworth, a sophomore, won first place for her take on Mark Anthony’s “Friends, Romans, countrymen” speech from *Julius Caesar*, Act III. Lauren Mlicko, a sophomore, took second place, reciting Portia’s speech “I should not need, if you were gentle, Brutus,” also from *Julius Caesar*, this time Act II. Kiara Ortiz, a senior, came in third with her portrayal of Ophelia from *Hamlet*, Act IV, handing out flowers as she mourns her father’s death.

Charlotte Ainsworth will go on to compete in the national competition to be held between January and March, 2020, here in New York City.



Left to right: G. Gregory, A. Crowley, I Chang, E. Madden, Ms. Somboonchoke, L. Mlicko, M. Silva, A. Pedone, E. Karapataka

Civics Unplugged *Melanie Robichaux*

As high school students, thinking about our futures can be stressful and scary. What college will we go to? What do we want to do with our lives? Are we prepared enough for the real world? It can feel overwhelming and can be hard for adults to truly understand what it is like in this day and age.

Civics Unplugged is a non-profit that helps the youth of today equip the skills needed to succeed in “the real world.” This organization gives high school students an outlet to voice their concerns about issues in their communities and the society we live in today and be truly heard and understood by adults. Civics Unplugged offers a fellowship that inspires change. The fellowship is a three-month online training program that includes the practice and teaching of personal development, systems mapping, and civics education. It incorporates teamwork and one-on-one mentoring with another participant from another part of the country.

At the end of the training, there will be a three-day convention in Washington, D.C. which will include speakers, skills and issue-based workshops, and the opportunity to meet other participants with the same goals. The program will begin in late January 2020 and the convention will take place from June 29th to July 1st on Georgetown University’s campus.

This freshman found out about Civics Unplugged by accident. My friend, Poppy, who goes to school in England, was visiting

me after school recently, but before we could embark on our journey to SoHo, we had to stop by her father’s office. I was expecting it to be a quick trip just to say hi, but I was very wrong.

As we walked into the office space we were welcomed and asked about our opinions, as teenagers, on Civics Unplugged as a whole and their upcoming plans. About five people were working in the office space. As they explained their projects and goals to the two of us, I could see the passion and fire in their eyes. I could tell that they would do anything for this project and had already put tons of time and effort into this. By that point, I had completely forgotten about SoHo and had fully immersed myself in the conversation. I knew that they truly wanted to help make a change in teenagers’ lives. They told us about what they had in mind for the future of the company and the fellowship. They encouraged us to do more research and consider signing up for the fellowship.

Amanda Cole, one of the co-founders we spoke to, said, “Civics Unplugged is a social enterprise that exists to ensure America’s youth are heard and equipped with the training, support, and community they need to be the catalysts of change history has proven them to be.” For more information about Civics Unplugged or the fellowship, please visit their website: <https://civicsunplugged.org>

Soccer Champs *Monica Sullivan*

Dominican Academy has a reputation for stellar academics. But what you might not know is their reputation for competitive sports. Making the championships is a big deal. But making the trip to the championships for three years in a row is tremendous. Let me introduce you to a special group of girls.

A soccer team cannot be complete without a goalie, and our soccer team has a fantastic one. Samantha DeMaria has been the starting goalie for DA since her freshman year and with that, she has brought her grit, leadership, and incredible saves. In front of her are the best defenders in the league: Ella Keaney, Marie Sullivan, Georgia Cropper, Shaun Smith, and Marisa Fernandez. From their powerful kicks to their strong tackles, they have kept the net safe from any goals. The midfielders, with their incredible speed and skill, include freshmen Charlotte Hamm, Mireille Adamo, Amelia Brzozowski, along with sophomores Blair Brennan, Teresa Anderson and Alessia Coluccio, juniors Despina Anastasiou, Morgan Harris and Keanna Goddard, and seniors Brideen Peel, Hailey Wolf, Evelyn Kadzielawski and Shania Cabrera. And last but not least, the goal scorers: our forwards, Allison Giebler and this author.

Of course, the soccer team has had its ups and downs. Many of the girls suffered injuries this season, such as sprained ankles or hurt knees. The team itself does not get much attention. Perhaps the worst of all was when we didn’t get an extra bus for our friends and family to come support

us at the championship game, despite having gone to the championships three years in a row.

Nevertheless, being a part of such a special team has been one of my favorite memories at DA. I’ve been able to create such tight friendships with people I wouldn’t have known otherwise, and we’re the closest team you could imagine. From going to breakfast after morning soccer practices to singing “All I Want For Christmas Is You” to games on the bus to doing Zumba in the auditorium, these group of girls are some of my favorite people, and I hope they feel the same way.

As the seniors and I graduate, we hope that the team persists to be the best it can be and that it continues being the close family of players who all consider each other sisters.



Soccer Champions

A Night at the Orchestra *Ava Filocamo*

The New York Philharmonic is a leading symphony right here in New York City which has been performing since 1842. This freshman had the opportunity to attend a performance of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* recently.

As I entered the hall, my breath was taken away. The hall is so beautiful and looks like a jewelry box, glittering with its twinkling lights. I sat in the orchestra seats, but there are also four levels of balcony seating. One of the amazing things about this hall is that you could be sitting in the orchestra seats or up in the balcony and the sound of the music would still be beautiful. The acoustics are practically perfect. When the music started, I shut my eyes to hear the instruments speak to each other. Although I haven't read Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, I was able to understand the plot from the drama in the music. I could hear the anger and tension between the families

from the lower, deeper instruments. For example, the brass had heavy low tones whereas the flutes, clarinet, and harp had light and airy music. From this, I heard the love and romance between *Romeo and Juliet*. In this performance, the music, rather than the words, told the story. The notes brought the audience along through the flight scenes, the secret lovers' meeting and the tragic end. Hearing Tchaikovsky's composition over a century after it was written was like traveling back in time. It was transcendent!

After intermission, Bryce Denner debuted, as the first electric guitarist to solo with the New York Philharmonic in a work written for full orchestra. Denner was not a soloist but played in concert with the orchestra. There were a lot of clanking and bursts of percussion and in some parts of the piece, it reminded me of a "battle of the bands" in a high school gym instead of such a world-renowned orchestra. As a

flute player who typically plays classical music, this was outside of what I expected to hear during a symphony performance. This piece really opened my eyes to what an orchestra can truly do and redefined the boundaries of classical music. When the music ended, I appreciated the new style, but I'm not sure I'd seek out the composer again. I heard such contrasting pieces that night -- classical, well-known music and a newly debuted modern piece. These pieces both opened my eyes and ears to show that music can come in all different styles. The best part was that all of these music styles are literally at our fingertips here in NYC. We are lucky to have so many opportunities to experience musical culture so close to home. The Philharmonic even offers discounted student tickets! I highly recommend experiencing live orchestral music in such a beautiful atmosphere.

HOBY *Isabella Quatela*

When my mother and I drove into the Adelphi University parking lot, we heard the cheers and chants of our new HOBY family. The 2019 HOBY New York Metro had begun. The HOBY which is short for the Hugh O'Brian Leadership Foundation is a program specifically designed for young people to help them find their place as leaders in our world.

Four DA girls and I did not know what to expect when we were nominated to attend this seminar early in the year, but very quickly, we realized that the weekend would be filled with positive energy and fun! One of the first things our counselors taught us was the HOBY cheers, which we constantly repeated throughout the weekend to bring the energy up. Being able to cheer and dance was an enormous amount of fun.

Once settled, we found our groups and began to know each other. Within minutes, we had already formed bonds with our teammates and the bond would only grow stronger as the weekend

progressed. Throughout the first day, we participated in team-building exercises and competitions, which centered around working together and using each other's strengths to accomplish a collective goal. One of my favorite activities in the weekend was the Free-Market Challenge in which groups were given a schedule and a certain amount of "money" and had to come up with a business either offering a good or service. My group started brainstorming and used each other's talents such as creativity, math skills, and organization skills to come up with a business. After producing our goods, the floor was open to visit each group business. The open market time allowed us to interact with other groups and have fun. With that, I was able to build even more friendships. In the end, my group ended up winning due to us gaining the most profit.

Other than doing groups games and exercises, HOBY brought in speakers who taught us how they found their

strength and used it to become a leader in this world. The speakers taught me that our journey to success and finding our place as a leader is not easy and takes a lot of patience and time. They, however, persevered through the obstacles and accomplished their goals and beyond, which inspired me to take on every day with a different outlook and realize that my place in the world may be different than my peers. With each of us finding how we can contribute, we can use our differences to accomplish one big goal, whatever it may be.

HOBY was an experience I will never forget. The friendships I formed with the other youth leaders will last a lifetime. There was never a dull moment and being able to share this experience with my DA sisters only made it that much better. I wish to return as a junior counselor in the future so I can help make an impact on other leaders the same way HOBY made an impact on me.

Volleyball Champs *Isabella Quatela*

The last Tuesday in October was when the DA volleyball team was finally able to lend voice to the iconic Queen lyrics, "We are the Champions!" The squad won the championship of the GCHSAA Division 2 league.

This regular season was a whirlwind of excitement. On top of the eagerness to compete from the volleyball players, we welcomed two new coaches to the DA volleyball family, Coach Kilduff and Coach Quatela.

After a great regular season, the team made it to the playoffs against Notre Dame in Staten Island. The match had everyone at the edges of their seats as the energy in the room was intense. The game went to five sets and each point was a result of an ongoing volley between the teams. In the last set, which only goes to 15 points, DA was down at the beginning of the set, but the players didn't give up. With the last couple of points up for grabs DA came back and triumphed. This meant we were on the road to the championships.

Making it to the final dance made all the players delirious with excitement on the fateful day of reckoning. The players went through the rounds of a normal school day on but told each other in the hallways "Are you ready to win?" We carried this energy on the bus with us, blasting music and singing along. We were ready to take on the challenge.

When we arrived at Sacred Heart in the Bronx, we immediately started gearing up for the game. There were so many parents at the gym already there to greet us. Even other DA supporters came to watch the game. Sister Pat, Ms. Mazarra and Ms. Bruno enjoyed the bus ride with us!

After some time of stretching, the match was about to begin. The game started with a bang and ended with a bang. Our serves were on point in the first set, winning the game with the other team in single digits. This raised our spirits even more and boosted our confidence. The second set also ended with a bang. Both the team and coaches agreed that we had never played this well as a team before.

At this time, the soccer team had won its championship and some of the team came to cheer us on. Sister Margaret even came to see us play. Knowing the soccer team also won made us want victory even more.

The fourth set was a fight between both teams, always one point up or one point down. Towards the end of the set, we were down more than one point. We needed to keep our heads in the game and play as a team. The audience in the stands were cheering and pep talks were echoed around on the court. All our hard work this season brought us to where we were, and we did not want to let it go to waste. In the last couple of points of the game, with some clever front row playing and good serving, we won our points back and won the game. To say that my heart was beating out of my chest is an understatement. When the whistle blew, some of the team didn't even know what had happened because they were so focused!

With that, everyone ran on the court, started cheering, and took pictures. Happy tears were shed. It is a moment this junior will remember forever. I am looking forward to taking part of the journey all over again next year!



Volleyball Champions

Oedipus Rex *Kate Izzo*

It was ten on a dreary October morning and shouts for the Greek god Zeus rang out through the courtyard at Xavier. This was the opening show of the Xavier Dramatics Society's Oedipus Rex. There were only three performances, all of them on the same day. The first show was at ten, the second at three, and a finale at six-thirty. The show was less than half an hour-long, but it had required a lot of hard work and dedication.

Our fantastic directors, Mrs. DiMarco and Mrs. Hickman, worked with us every step of the way. They always answered our questions and they were very supportive of the effort we all put into the play. This was not an easy show to put on, not only because of the show itself but because of the short rehearsal time. We had just over a month to prepare for the show. The play's process required a lot of long rehearsals, dedication, and hard work. It was one of the most rewarding shows that I have ever been in.

I formed strong bonds with the cast members, especially the other girls from DA that included Camille, Maria, Ella, Grace, Quynh, and Cassandra, and the Xavier boys who were kind

and welcoming. Before even reading the script, most of the cast knew the story because Xavier includes Oedipus in their English curriculum, as DA does.

This understanding helped us dig deeper into our characters and memorize our lines. Everyone worked hard at every rehearsal and gave the show their all.

However, rehearsals weren't all work; we found some time for play. For example, at one rehearsal, the boy who played Oedipus decided to break down the name Oedipus and make nicknames like "Oeddi," pronounced "Eddy." The cast really began to feel like a family as rehearsals progressed. We were all supportive of each other and I am so proud to be able to call this cast my friends. There is no better way to bond than in flimsy, ancient Greek-style costumes in the cold and dark of an October night.

The experience of being in Xavier's Oedipus Rex was an amazing opportunity and I am eternally grateful to having the chance to be in the show where I met some amazing people who I now consider to be my friends.