

25th
Anniversary
SPECIAL EDITION
Annual Report
..... 2018-2019





Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce

From the
PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Gesu School,

In 2018-2019, Gesu School celebrated our **25th Anniversary as an independent Catholic school**. We reflect on our legacy and our future as a Jesuit and IHM institution, where **we educate the whole child and provide resources so that every child can learn**.

The Gesu parish had been a **cornerstone of our North Philadelphia community since 1873**. At its peak, the Church of the Gesu welcomed 20,000 parishioners. Facing financial hardship and urban deterioration in the 1980s, the struggling parish closed in 1993.

At this time, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia gave approval for the Jesuits and IHM Sisters to keep Gesu School open, no longer as a parish-supported institution, but as an independent Catholic school, the first of its kind in Philadelphia. **Gesu blazed the trail for the mission schools that followed 20 years later and became a national model for inner-city education**.

Gesu continues evolving to meet our community's needs. We recently adapted our mission statement to reaffirm our commitment to holistic education and civic engagement, while remaining steadfast to our Jesuit and IHM roots. We are pleased to share this new iteration:

Inspired by the Jesuit and IHM traditions of social justice, faith, creative hope, and love, Gesu School helps students to transcend all forms of poverty by providing a comprehensive, innovative education. We empower our students to develop their strengths, overcome challenges, and become positive, engaged members of the community and the world.

Today, Gesu serves 450 Pre-K-8th graders. We **nurture the whole person** through academics for **remedial to advanced learners, a soft skills curriculum, Catholic values, and support services**, such as a counseling department and social worker. With this holistic approach, our students thrive.

Thank you to our supporters, who make a Gesu education possible through your time, prayer, talent, and generosity. You are an essential part of our legacy and our future—the next 25 years and beyond!

Peace and blessings,

Bryan H. Carter
President and CEO

P.S. I welcome you to visit Gesu online or in person to experience our community in action. Contact the Development Office at 215-763-9077 or development@gesuschool.org. Stay current on Gesu news. Visit gesuschool.org. Click “Join our email list” or “Tour our school.”

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Thank you to our generous donors.



Photo Left:

A 2nd grader dives into reading in Gesu's Vivienne Ehret Library. All students enjoy a weekly library period.

Front Cover Photos:

Founding President Rev. George W. Bur, S.J. connects with Gesu students.

A 1st grader begins the day with prayer, followed by a school-wide rap on character development. Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce

Individualized learning in a 6th grade English Language Arts class. Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce

Lead Counselor Jonathan Jackson '99 shares a special moment at his daughter's Gesu Pre-K graduation.

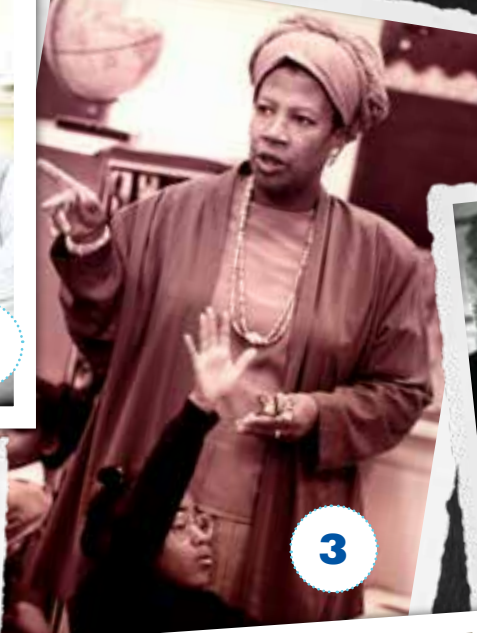
25th Anniversary RETROSPECTIVE



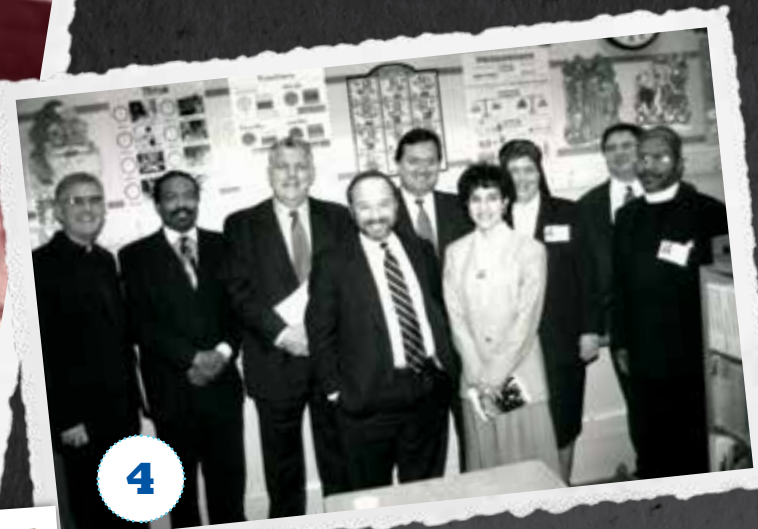
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1. In 1993, Rev. George W. Bur, S.J. (center) and Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM (left) lead Gesu in our **new president and principal model**, blazing a trail for educational success and financial solvency. **Winston J. Churchill** (right) takes the helm as Gesu's **Founding Board Chair**, leading an ecumenical board and building a sustainable model of philanthropy. These leaders transitioned Gesu from a parish to an independent school and solidified our **nationwide legacy as a model for urban education**.

2. Gesu creates **single-gender classrooms in 1994** to keep male students engaged in the classroom and to provide a platform for girls to express their voices at an early age. Single-gender classrooms now encompass **3rd-8th grade**.

3. **Ms. Shirley Bright '61, 3rd Grade Teacher** and Director of the **Akybra Theater Program** and the award-winning **Gesu Forensics Team**, shares a legacy of pride in the black community with generations of Gesu students.

4. **Gesu's Annual Symposium on Transforming Inner-City Education** launches in **1997**

to bring together funders, stakeholders, policymakers, and educators to tackle the tough issues in urban education. From our first moderator, the late **Tim Russert**, to panelists like **Stedman Graham, Joe Klein, and Paul Tough**, the annual event brings together top thought leaders to stimulate productive conversation and empower educators and the community for our work in the field.

5. To more comprehensively **support students with learning differences**, Gesu develops **resource rooms in 1999**, offering individualized instruction and space where every child can learn.

6. **Chris Beck** serves as **Gesu President and CEO from 2003 - 2011** and **leads Gesu's Building for Tomorrow Campaign**, which added the **4th and 5th floors, elevator, and gym in 2007**.

7. **Bryan Carter** leads as **Gesu President and CEO from 2011 to present**, **stabilizing the school's financial health, strengthening relationships** with families and corporate and community partners, and **envisioning future growth**.

8. In 2015, **Dancing with the Students Gesu School** performs at the **World Meeting of Families**, during **Pope Francis's visit to Philadelphia**.

9. The Gesu community builds a **new, state-of-the-art playscape in 2015**. Donors, trustees, parents/guardians, Gesu staff, and even children from Rosemont School of the Holy Child contributed—from **raising \$75,000** to constructing the new playscape together. **Resurfacing was finalized in 2016**.

10. In 2016, Gesu dedicates our **library** to long-term volunteer librarian and supporter, **Vivienne Ehret**. The library expands to include a **new media center, supported by Fox & Roach Charities**.

11. Gesu launches the **Graduate Support Program in 2016** with funding by **Peter G. Gould, Ph.D., and Robin Potter**, to ensure that students continue their educational advancement, fulfill their potential, and maintain productive roles in society as alumni.

12. In 2018, Gesu's new **Mission and Ministry Department** initiates our first **Catholic Student Union**.

A Celebration of Our

SUPPORTERS

Highlights from Our Partnerships in 2018-2019

Gesu School's legacy of giving has transformed thousands of lives. Contributions to Gesu School—from corporations, foundations, and individuals like YOU—have provided innovative, life-changing education to thousands of students. Thanks to all of our partners, students in North Philadelphia look forward to bright futures!

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Thank you to corporate partner **Deloitte** in Philadelphia for visiting Gesu School throughout spring 2019 to teach our 3rd graders coding and animation. Students were immersed in creating their own characters with the Scratch program.



Our Gesu School community is grateful to **Wells Fargo** for supporting Gesu scholarships through Pennsylvania's Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit program. Special thanks to Susan Johnson from Wells Fargo Community Relations for visiting Gesu School and participating in our Career Day for 5th-8th grade students.

ANNUAL FUND

Gesu's annual fund supports our day-to-day critical operating needs, through fall and holiday appeals and our One Day Challenge, our annual day of giving. These initiatives play a vital role in helping Gesu raise funds to achieve our mission and our yearly fundraising goal.

MONTHLY GIVING DONORS AND MENTORS

Monthly giving provides Gesu with steady, sustainable resources throughout the fiscal year. We thank those donors who contribute through Gesu's monthly donation program, especially our Junior Board members. For the cost of one coffee, cocktail, or dinner per month, these donors redirect funds to impacting children's lives.

The Gesu Junior Board also manages a mentoring program. Young professionals meet monthly with 6th-8th grade students to help them navigate the academic and social challenges and successes of their early teenage years.



ONE DAY CHALLENGE

The Ziegler family created a Gesu legacy of giving by launching our One Day Challenge and continually supporting this essential fundraising effort for five years. We recognize their dedicated generosity to our annual fund, which provides support for Gesu's most pressing needs—from maintaining our building to paying teacher salaries. Over the past five years, the One Day Challenge has raised \$292,604.



"One of the great things about supporting Gesu School is that there are so many different ways to get involved. Everyone is different in terms of what they're able to offer, whether it be time or resources. Gesu allows for both. The monthly donor program is an easy way to support the school's mission financially throughout the year, and it can be done at any amount. Separately, I've really enjoyed the mentoring program, which allows me to spend time with the middle school students and offer insights as they prepare for their transition to high school and beyond."

—DAVE HILTON III, VICE PRESIDENT, GESU JUNIOR BOARD

SPONSOR A CHILD

Gesu's Sponsor a Child program supported 219 students in 2018-2019. A sponsorship covers roughly three-quarters of the annual cost of one Gesu student's education. Sponsors can choose to get to know students through our four annual sponsorship events or remain anonymous. Gesu updates each sponsor on the student's growth throughout the year.



"We believe that a structured and caring education is essential to the development of children. Gesu provides the finest education we have seen in this regard. Their commitment to helping children from challenging backgrounds unlock their potential is truly life changing. As so often happens in life, we began giving to Sponsor a Child in 2011 in the belief that it would assist the children, but we have benefited much more by our interactions with the children."

—KATHY AND PETER LINNEMAN



AWARD-WINNING 4TH GRADE TEACHER *Serves Gesu for 15 Years*

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT,
TOP-NOTCH TEACHERS TRANSFORM STUDENTS' LIVES.

A natural mentor with an innate ability to inspire, Sean O'Brien is the 2019 Knetzger Teaching Prize winner. Nominated by colleagues for his dedication to Gesu's mission, Mr. O'Brien also sets a culture of high expectations.

His methods work. Fourth grade shifts from a focus on learning to read, to reading to learn content. Mr. O'Brien excels at moving students through this transition. Colleagues describe him as a "no frills teacher" who "is firm and consistent in his relationship with students, always calling them to a higher standard, while raising their reading and math scores and bringing them to grade level."

After graduating from Penn State with a B.S. in History, Mr. O'Brien arrived at Gesu in 2004 as a **volunteer with the Response-Ability Teacher Service Program.**

"The best part of being in 4th grade and having Mr. O'Brien was everything—from math to writing, to ELA (English Language Arts), you name it!"

—ELIJAH
5TH GRADER



Mr. O'Brien and 4th graders share their most important reason why "Gesu Works."

Understanding the Motivators

To make learning relevant and fun, Mr. O'Brien engages 4th grade boys in technology and sports. Lessons regularly infuse new technologies, such as Chromebooks and the First in Math program. The gaming format and friendly competition draw students in, while strengthening key computation skills.

A positive learning environment and sports theme permeate the classroom. Sports posters adorn the walls with maxims like "Winners Are Workers" to enhance soft skills, such as grit. When the class consistently exhibits positive behavior, they earn time to play basketball together. A special tradition is a March Madness game watch.

Mr. O'Brien explains, **"I encourage students to challenge themselves by having a good attitude towards learning. Having a positive attitude will help them overcome adversity."**

A Role Model at Gesu and Beyond

Mr. O'Brien volunteers on committees to broaden students' cultural awareness and engage them in service. As liaison for the Philadelphia Orchestra's School Partnership Program at Gesu, he manages field trips and artists' weekly visits. As chair for Catholic Schools Week, he organizes the faculty-student basketball game, a food drive, and fundraising for missions, such as Catholic Relief Services.

He mentors alumni and youth outside of Gesu. Javier '14, a sophomore at Temple University, still visits his former teacher. He recalls, **"Mr. O'Brien exemplifies many characteristics that make him exceptional. One that shines is his empathy. Now I can acknowledge his impressive skill of balancing time and work with genuine laughs and honesty. Mr. O'Brien introduced that skill to me and continues to introduce quality life skills to the young men he teaches."**

Mr. O'Brien cares for the whole person, including academic progress and personal growth. Colleague Dana Gilbert, Learning Support Teacher, recognizes that he "pushes his students to be their absolute best." She notes Mr. O'Brien's frequent attendance at alumni sports games and routine pep talks to Gesu students.

A leader in his Fishtown community, he has coached and led youth programs for 20 years. To recognize his contributions, Mr. O'Brien received the 2018 Joseph M. Minarik Memorial Community Education Award.

Selfless and quietly generous, Mr. O'Brien is a true "man for others."

The Knetzger Outstanding Teacher Award, endowed by a gift from Jay and Kathy Sherrerd in memory of Gesu Trustee Edwin Knetzger, is presented annually to that faculty member demonstrating the highest quality of teaching ability and commitment.

"Sean is a dedicated educator with a quiet demeanor and a strong commitment to the students at Gesu, as well as in his community. His kind-hearted nature makes him a role model for our students and a mentor for graduates."

—DANA GILBERT
LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER



Fourth Grade Boys Teacher Sean O'Brien (right center) receives the 2019 Knetzger Outstanding Teacher Award from President and CEO Bryan Carter (left), Principal Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM (right), and Ginny Unger (left center). The award was established in memory of Ms. Unger's father, Gesu Trustee Edwin Knetzger.



Javier '14 (left), now a sophomore at Temple University, returns to Gesu to visit his 4th Grade Teacher, Sean O'Brien (right).

Alumni Accolades

Keith McClain '89

Global Head of Compensation, New York Life

Gesu Sponsor a Child supporter and former Trustee • Secretary to the Compensation Committee of the New York Life Board of Directors • Rutgers University '02, M.A. Human Resources Management • University of Maryland '97, B.A. Industrial and Organizational Psychology • St. Joseph's Preparatory School '93



"Gesu has played a huge role in my life. It was a safe refuge from the streets of North Philly in the 1980s. It was a place where people believed in and invested in me, and where I learned to believe in and invest in myself. It was the place where I developed the principles and values that I still use to navigate my life and career. I am honored to be a part of the Gesu family and to contribute in any way that I can."



Michael Neal '03

Senior Accountant, Drexel University
Former Accountant, The Philadelphia Orchestra Association

Saint Joseph's University '11, B.S. Finance and Accounting • John Cabot University '11, B.S. International Finance, Rome, Italy • PricewaterhouseCoopers National Student Leader • Habitat for Humanity Service Leader • Delta Sigma Pi Business Fraternity • St. Joseph's Preparatory School '07

"My experience at Gesu was more than learning in the classroom. Gesu gave me the opportunity to learn amongst children who looked and grew up just like me. This institution instilled within me life's most powerful lesson—we all have the power to choose who we want to be in this life, and with effort, perseverance, and faith, our potential is limitless. I will forever be grateful to the many teachers and coaches who helped a young, insecure boy believe that he could be something greater."

Verishia Coaxum '07

Law Student at Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law '22

Villanova Law School Black Law Student Association and Barristers Association of Philadelphia • Former Victim Advocate and Community Relations Coordinator for North Central Victim Services • Temple University '15, B.A. English with Concentration in Creative Writing, Criminal Justice Minor • Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholar Alumna • Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society • Former Secretary of Temple University College of Liberal Arts Alumni Association • Project Assistant and Community Researcher, Temple University • Philadelphia Mennonite High School (The City School) '11

"Gesu created my foundation for success. I was encouraged to be creative, taught how to network, and learned to take advantage of my resources. I was introduced to the culture of Philadelphia through plays, museum visits, and other class trips. Gesu developed my confidence and helped me discover my voice."



Dr. Melissa (Powell) Dyer '03

Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, Virginia State University

Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine '16, Ph.D. Neuroscience • Published in scientific journals for traumatic brain injury research, including *Journal of Neurotrauma* and *Neuroscience* • Awards and conference recognition for research, including \$100,000+ grant supplement; 3rd place award for articulate demonstration of knowledge, National Capital Area Traumatic Brain Injury Symposium; travel award for promising research abstract submission, National Neurotrauma Society Symposium • Faculty judge for undergraduate and graduate research symposia • Hampton University '11, B.S. Biology, Concentration in Cellular and Molecular Biology, Magna Cum Laude • Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. • Elected Graduate Student Representative, Central Virginia Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience • Springside School (Springside Chestnut Hill Academy) '07

"God has sure been good to me... Twenty years later, I still hum the tunes I learned in the Gesu choir, as Mr. Ratliff became one with the piano, driving harmony among elementary school students. The exemplary didactic skills and unwavering compassion from Gesu teachers were instrumental in shaping my education. It was at Gesu that I developed my love of science, refined my grammar and sentence structure, and explored the fundamentals of faith. I am eternally grateful for the valuable lessons and memorable experiences from Gesu School that shaped the ambitious educator that I am today."



Student Gallery

VILLANELLE

By Talan, Grade 6
Backe Advanced Writing Program

Standing graceful and bold
as beautiful as can be
Rhonda is there to comfort me in the cold.

She is smart, wise, can't tell she's getting old
Loves her family and me
Standing graceful and bold.

Diagnosed with cancer. Everyone is worried, makes me want to fold
But I know God has got her; she will be set free
Rhonda is there to comfort me in the cold.

I go to visit, and she starts to cry; her faith is an open road
She tells me she's coming home as fast as the rolling sea
Standing graceful and bold.

She comes home. I can't wait to see her, all of my stories untold
She smiles, kisses, and hugs me tightly
Rhonda is there to comfort me in the cold.

She passes away. I'm in a living disaster; she lived a life of gold
I'm confused, in shock, thinking how could this be?
Standing graceful and bold
Rhonda is there to comfort me in the cold.

Talan hopes to attend Duke University, play basketball, and be an author.



"Celebration," Burlap Art by Makayla, Grade 8



Left & Above: Students in Pre-K and 1st grade reflect on developing independence, one of the soft skills Gesu weaves into our curriculum through our MAGIS initiative: Motivation, Awareness, Grit, Independence, Social competence.

PERSONIFICATION POEM

By Amir, Grade 7
Backe Advanced Writing Program

The trees swish
The wind sighs
The sun smiles
The sky cries
The plants sway with glee
Everything grows in the forest
The ground hums in song
The birds chirp happily
The rain showers the forest floor
Plants decompose
Trees grow old and snap
Leaves become crunchy as chips
Fires start sweeping
The whole forest turns into
one giant supernova
Things calm down
Things regrow
The forest moves on
It doesn't hold grudges
So why do we?

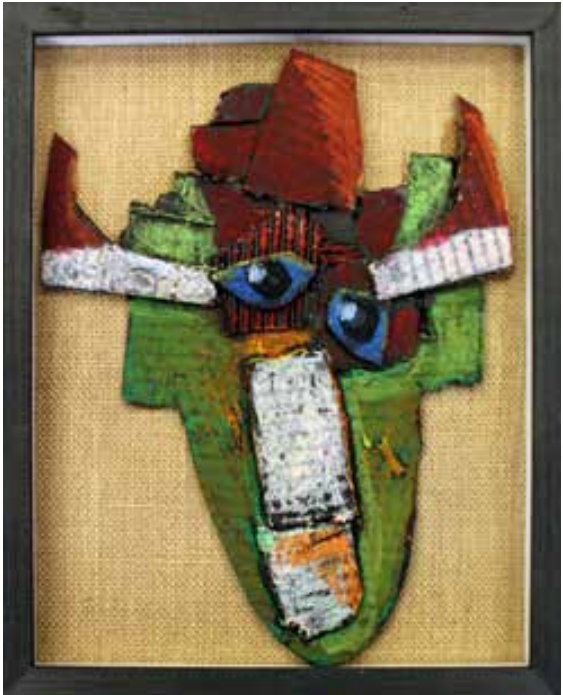
Amir's ambition is to become an electrical engineer.



"Lavender Peaks," Acrylic Painting by Faith, Grade 8



Above: First graders learn engineering fundamentals by building spaghetti and marshmallow towers.



Left: "Warrior," Cardboard by Nafis, Grade 5



"Sailing," Acrylic Painting by Robert, Grade 6

Visit Gesu School's YouTube Channel to enjoy musical selections and other student presentations.
[youtube.com/gesuschoolworks](https://www.youtube.com/gesuschoolworks)

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

BACK-TO-SCHOOL PICNIC Launches 25th Anniversary Celebrations

The 2018-2019 academic year marked Gesu School's 25th Anniversary as an independent Catholic school and a national model of inner-city education.

The first week of school culminated in a back-to-school picnic to jumpstart celebrations for the year. A highlight included a proclamation issued by Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and Councilman Darrell Clarke, presented by Pennsylvania State Representative Donna Bullock, Gesu School Trustee and parent. The citation honors Gesu's leadership team for their dedicated service to Gesu School and children in Philadelphia.

Read media coverage of 25th Anniversary events at gesuschool.org. Click "News & Events."



Pennsylvania State Representative Donna Bullock (right) presents the proclamation to (from left to right): President and CEO Bryan Carter, Vice President of Development Robert Weinstein, and Principal Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM.



Students, families, teachers, and staff enjoyed a picnic lunch, face painting, bounce houses, and time to build community.

25th Anniversary GRADUATION CEREMONY

(Right) The Gesu School Class of 2019 processes into the Church of the Gesu to celebrate the 25th Anniversary graduation ceremony.



Graduation Photos by David DeBalko



Members of the Class of 2019 with Gesu School President and CEO Bryan Carter (left) and PA State Rep. Donna Bullock, Gesu School Trustee and commencement speaker (right).



The Gesu School Class of 2019 celebrates the 25th Anniversary commencement.

25TH ANNIVERSARY MASS



Concelebrants gather in prayer and celebration at Gesu School's 25th Anniversary Mass in the Church of the Gesu. (Left to right): Rev. Daniel R. J. Joyce, S.J.; Rev. Raymond J. Donaldson, S.J.; Rev. Charles Frederico, S.J.; and Rev. George W. Bur, S.J.



(Above) Sixth Grade Girls Teacher Michelle Randa shares a reading at Gesu School's 25th Anniversary Mass.

(Upper Right) At the 25th Anniversary Mass, the Gesu Gospel Choir inspires the community with their joyful voices.

(Right) At Gesu School's 25th Anniversary Mass, IHM Sisters, including founding Gesu faculty members Sr. Linda Filipponi, IHM (left) and Sr. Fran Small, IHM (center), present an offering with Librarian Sr. Mary Bur, IHM (right).



Mass Photos by Sabina Louise Pierce

25th Anniversary • GALA • RAISES RECORD FUNDS

Thank you to all who supported the 25th Anniversary Gesu Gala at the Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue on May 6. **The gala drew 500 attendees and raised more than \$500,000!** Your generosity enables Gesu School to deliver innovative, holistic education and ensure that North Philadelphia's children achieve bright futures.

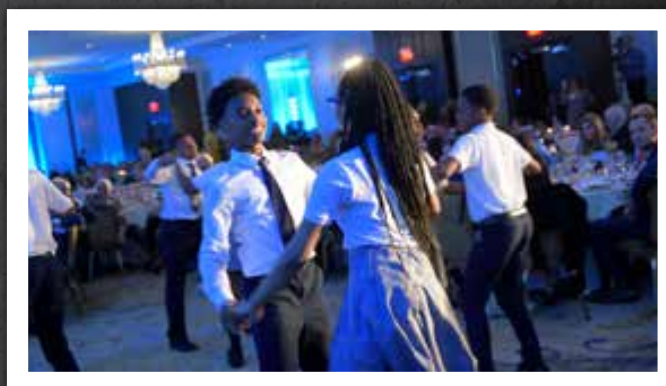
The gala celebrated Gesu's 25th year as an independent Catholic school and a national model of inner-city education. **Congratulations to Gesu Spirit Medalist Winston J. Churchill, Founding Board Chair.** His leadership catapulted Gesu to success. The Gesu Spirit Medal honors individuals who have shown extraordinary commitment to Gesu School through their loyal advocacy and actions, and who have made a significant contribution to Gesu School's success as a model inner-city elementary school.

Special thanks to all gala sponsors and **2019 Presenting Sponsors: James & Agnes Kim & Family, M & S Foundation, and an anonymous supporter.** Thank you to the 2019 Gala committee, co-chairs Tad & Candy Decker and Susan Martinelli Shea, and Honorary co-chairs Rev. George W. Bur, S.J. and Daryl J. Shore '94.

View videos and more photos at [gesuschool.org/2019galarecap](https://www.gesuschool.org/2019galarecap).



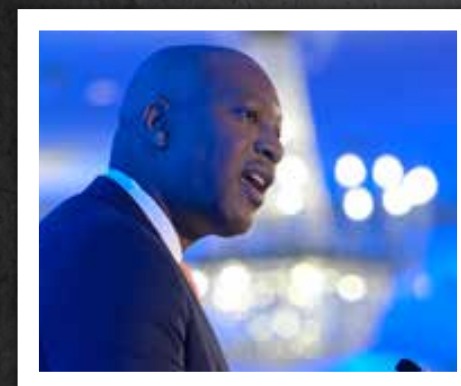
Gesu School Founding Board Chair Winston J. Churchill (2nd from left) receives the 2019 Spirit Medal from (left to right): Bryan Carter, President and CEO; Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM, Principal; Rev. George W. Bur, S.J., Founding President of Gesu School and Honorary Gala Co-Chair. Photo by David DeBalko



Dancing with the Students Gesu School performs tango, swing, and meringue at the 25th Anniversary Gesu Gala. Photo by David DeBalko



U.S. Senator Bob Casey, former Gesu School 5th Grade Math Teacher and Basketball Coach through Jesuit Volunteer Corps, speaks at the 25th Anniversary Gesu Gala about the transformative experience he had teaching at Gesu in the early 1980s and its impact on his life. Photo by David DeBalko



Daryl J. Shore '94, Gesu Trustee and Honorary Gala Co-Chair, speaks at the 25th Anniversary Gala on how Gesu School provided a foundation for his personal development, educational success through graduate school, and in his business career in New York City. Photo by David DeBalko



Daryl J. Shore '94, Gesu Trustee and Honorary Gala Co-Chair; Rev. George W. Bur, S.J., Founding President of Gesu School and Honorary Gala Co-Chair; Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM, Principal; Susan Martinelli Shea, Gala Co-Chair and Gesu Trustee; Winston J. Churchill, 2019 Spirit Medalist and Founding Chair, Gesu Board of Trustees, and Ellen Churchill, Gesu Trustee; Bryan Carter, President and CEO; Candy Decker & Tad Decker, Gesu Trustee and Gala Co-Chairs. Photo by David DeBalko



Gesu's talented young artists present pieces ranging from acrylic painting to plaster art and oil pastel. Thanks to Art Teacher Linda Hartzell for her leadership of the art auction.



The Gesu Gospel Choir inspires the audience, performing "Wake Up Everybody" and a special tribute to the Spirit Medalist. Photo by David DeBalko

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Photos left by David DeBalko

Heard in the Halls

Gesu's newly formed **Mission and Ministry Department** is led by Rev. Ray Donaldson, S.J. and Laura Weatherly. Initiatives included establishing Gesu's first Catholic Student Union, meeting with Catholic parents, and fostering spiritual development, such as praying the Examen weekly.



In January 2018, Gesu launched a **middle-school partnership with Holy Child School at Rosemont**. Students engage in **collaborative learning projects** around a shared read. This year's book was Linda Sue Park's *A Long Walk to the Water*, about the "lost boys" of the Sudan. Events included book discussion groups, a play performed by Holy Child, and social activities to build friendships and enhance learning.



Gesu students earned **1st place at the Philadelphia Reads Reading Olympics, a city-wide competition for 6th-8th graders!** The team read 15 books and, despite having the fewest students, successfully answered the most questions. "I could not be prouder of our students and how they handled themselves under pressure. They stuck together, remained positive, and persevered through tough competition," notes Rufino deSantos, 6th Grade Boys Teacher.



On May 29, **Gesu School President and CEO Bryan Carter joined the panel of a national town hall education series** with Roland Martin, The 74, and education advocates to discuss **"Is School Choice the Black Choice?"** CNN Commentator and Journalist Roland Martin visited Gesu to continue the national discussion.

Gesu's track team ran at the **Penn Relays**. Congratulations to the boys **4 x 100 team of 5th and 6th graders for making it to the finals!** All three of Gesu's girls relay teams won medals in the **Father Judge Relays**. The runners won two 2nd place medals and a 3rd place medal. We're proud of all the Gesu runners and thank **Coach Tonetta Dawson** for her expertise and commitment.

Gesu's **Great Debaters Forensics Team** delivered outstanding speeches at three competitions this spring. Congratulations to all the students and to **8th graders who placed in original oratory** at the Holy Ghost Prep Tournament: **Alphonso, 2nd place and Makayla, 4th place**. At the **2019 African American History Oratorical Contest** at Young Scholars Charter School, **Alphonso placed 2nd for his essay, "What's Free?" and Mikayla 3rd for her essay, "My Legacy."**

Music Teacher and Choir Director H.L. Ratliff was honored at The Mann Center for the Performing Arts Voices of Hope: A Black History Month Celebration for his excellence in music, dedication to community-building, and youth empowerment through the arts.

Gesu is proud to have **three CYO Region 58 basketball league champions!** Congratulations to the **girls JV team, girls varsity team, and boys varsity team!** We are so proud of these students for their teamwork and dedication. Thank you to **Coach Deal, Coach Joe, and Coach Liva** for their leadership and support all season.

NEWS FROM GESU'S GRADUATE SUPPORT PROGRAM

Launched in 2016, the Graduate Support Program aims to ensure that Gesu students and alumni continue their educational advancement, fulfill their potential, and maintain productive roles in society. The GSP supports all alumni after they have moved on to high school, college, or the workforce.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018-2019

Weekly Lunch-and-Learn Sessions

12 HIGH SCHOOLS visit Gesu

187 TOUGH POINTS with the high school admissions process for Gesu 7th and 8th graders

In-Person Outreach to Alumni Classes 2015-2018

25+ HIGH SCHOOLS receive visits

100 ALUMNI receive support

Annual High School Fair at Gesu

30+ HIGH SCHOOLS (including 6 boarding schools) participate

200+ MIDDLE-SCHOOL FAMILY MEMBERS from Gesu's neighborhood attend

Parent Academy Courses Prepare 6th and 7th Grade Guardians

HS 101: High School Admissions Timeline: Ready, Set, Go!

HS 201: How to Understand High School Admissions Requirements

HS 301: Understanding the Cost of High School

ARE YOU A GESU GRADUATE?

For more information on the Graduate Support Program, including Gesu reunions, college admissions resources, and career networking, contact Director Jose Gonzalez at 215-763-3660 or jose.gonzalez@gesuschool.org.

Gesu was proud to serve as an **MLK Day of Service** site. **150 volunteers from Gesu, St. Joseph's Preparatory School, and the community** collaborated for a day of service and reflection. Volunteers created placemats for **Meals on Wheels** and packed hygiene kits for **Project HOME, Calcutta House, and Jenna's Blessing Bags for the Homeless**, in memory of Temple University student Jenna Burleigh. The day included a universal prayer, screening of the film *The Hate U Give*, and creation of an **art installation with students' vision of a world without gun violence**. The **Dream Booth** is one of 100 exhibited across Philadelphia. Thanks to Gesu's Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops for their leadership.

GESU CLASS OF 2019

HIGH SCHOOLS

Archbishop John Carroll High School
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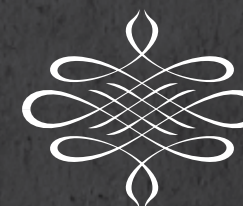
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Peter G. Gould Family Scholarship
Dorrance H. Hamilton Scholarship (4)
The James & Agnes Kim Foundation Scholarship (8)
Gerry & Marguerite Lenfest Scholarship (3)
Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus Scholarship (6)
Anne & Robert McAlaine Scholarship
Kathleen Bold McAlaine Memorial Endowment
Steve & Mary Ann Phillips Scholarship
John J. F. Sherrerd Scholarship (5)

Mark & Paula Solomon Scholarship
Ruth W. & A. Morris Williams, Jr. Scholarship (2)

Partnerships

Alliance for Catholic Education at Saint Joseph's University
Anti-Defamation League
Art Goes to School
Barnes Foundation
Barnes & Noble - Devon, PA
Black Diamonds Union - Temple University
Boy Scouts of America
Bryn Mawr Trust
Boston College
Camp Dogwood
Camp Keewaydin
Camp Kon-o-Kwee
Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia
Council for Relationships
Cradles to Crayons
Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School

Dancing with the Students
Down the Line and Beyond Foundation
Girard College
Girl Scouts of Southeast Pennsylvania
Holy Child School at Rosemont
Jesuit Schools Network
Jumpstart Philadelphia, Temple University
Kimmel Center
Mann Center for the

Performing Arts
Merion Mercy Academy
Mindfulness Through Movement
Old Saint Joseph's Parish
The Philadelphia Orchestra
Philadelphia Police Department - D.A.R.E.
The Rock School for Dance Education
St. Joseph's Preparatory School
Saint Joseph's University
Schools That Can
SpeakUp!
Stephen Klein Wellness Center / Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA
Temple University
YMCA, Columbia North

Jesuit Youth and Special Needs Fund

Sister Donna Anthony, OSF
Arrupe House Jesuits
Doris Dundon
Marie and Frank Golimowski
Gloria and Dave Hirschbine
John and Cindy Paté
Joseph Paté
Thomas & Sallie Paté
Sharon Runkowski
Eugene Ver'Schneider
Gerald and Kelly Ver'Schneider
John M. Ver'Schneider
Villanova Faith and Life Community



Faith '19

First Gesu graduate to attend Episcopal Academy '23

Perfect attendance at Gesu School from Pre-K-8th grade • Gesu student council, debate team, SpeakUp! planning committee/peer leader • Gesu Gospel Choir • Gesu varsity basketball, Gesu soccer • Tennis player with Down the Line and Beyond Foundation • JV soccer goalie, JV basketball, JV softball at Episcopal

25th Anniversary Commencement Speech

BY ADRIAN, GESU '19



Gesu 8th grader Adrian delivers his commencement speech, an inspiring reflection on the Gesu MAGIS, the soft skills woven into our curriculum and that prepare students to succeed. Photo by David DeBalko

We are here tonight closing one chapter in our lives and preparing to enter a new setting—a new setting that is unlike Gesu, which for most of us has been our home for ten years. This new environment is high school. It will allow us to fulfill our dreams—dreams such as becoming an athlete, lawyer, doctor, singer, actor or actress, politician, scientist, and so much more. Even though it may seem overwhelming and even a little stressful, the knowledge we have gained from Gesu will strengthen our efforts.

Learning to be “men and women for others” has taught us to be concerned with our growth, both individually and spiritually. We have learned to respect more than just ourselves; **we must also be mindful of others and our environment.**

MAGIS is a set of qualities that sets the standard for our success. MOTIVATION is the incentive that makes the impossible seem possible. It encourages **faith in our ability to succeed**, causing us to believe, “Yes, I can!” Through **AWARENESS**, we have learned to monitor not only ourselves but our environment as well. With **GRIT**, we have learned never to give up, to **keep working toward our goals**, putting our best foot forward. If we are to accomplish our dreams, we must **never back down from a challenge.**

Our parents and caregivers sent us to Gesu to become **INDEPENDENT** young men and women. **MAGIS has taught us to be brave and push through the obstacles blocking our path to success, and not to be swayed by someone else's opinion.** Through **SOCIAL COMPETENCE**, we have learned to **understand the needs of others and respect the gift of each person.** One service project taught us to be compassionate instead of judgmental toward others. **MAGIS are qualities we will carry throughout our lifetimes.**

Gesu School has been a great experience because the faculty, staff, and administration have invested themselves in our lives. Without the Gesu faculty, staff, administration, and the foresight of our parents, we would not be in this space tonight. **Gesu will always be the place we call home.** Thank you.

Adrian is a freshman at Germantown Friends School.

2018-2019 FINANCIALS & NUMBERS

At Gesu School, we strive to steward your gifts wisely so as to have the greatest impact for our 450 students. We invite you to review our audited financial statements on our website.

\$3,446,000
TOTAL FINANCIAL AID
to 450 Students in 2018-2019

\$12,500
TOTAL COST TO EDUCATE
One Gesu Student

1/3
Gesu Families with an
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME
OF LESS THAN \$30,000

100%
GESU SCHOOL QUALIFIES
100% for free/reduced breakfast
and lunch programs.

07408

UNITED WAY
Donor Choice Number



GESU | 25
SCHOOL |
EST. 1993

ESTABLISHED IN FAITH. UNITED IN PURPOSE.

1700 West Thompson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121

215-763-9077

www.GesuSchool.org

development@gesuschool.org



Facebook.com/gesuschool

[@TheGesuSchool](https://Twitter.com/TheGesuSchool)

LinkedIn.com/company/gesu-school

The MISSION

Inspired by the Jesuit and IHM traditions of social justice, faith, creative hope, and love, Gesu School helps students to transcend all forms of poverty by providing a comprehensive, innovative education. We empower our students to develop their strengths, overcome challenges, and become positive, engaged members of the community and the world.

The RESULTS

In a city where approximately 69 percent of public high school students graduate from high school in four years, 90 percent of Gesu alumni graduate high school on time, and of those graduates, 86 percent go on to college or post-secondary education.

Our Legacy, Our Future

We invite you to see our enduring legacy and how a Gesu education shapes children's futures by visiting our school or taking an online tour at gesuschool.org. Whether through your time, talent, or financial support, thank YOU for making an impact on 450 students' lives!



Photo by Edward Savaria