

IN SERVICE TO OTHERS | A LIFE SAVED | CELEBRATING LEGACY

The Mount

THE MAGAZINE OF MOUNT ST. DOMINIC ACADEMY | SUMMER 2023



Justice in Action
MSDA Mission Trip to the Border

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Mount St. Dominic ACADEMY

Empowering Young Women Since 1892



The Mount

VOLUME 12 NUMBER 2 | SUMMER 2023

The Mount is a publication of the Mount St. Dominic Academy Development & Alumnae Relations Department.

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ON THE COVER:

MSDA mission trip to McAllen, Texas in support of Catholic Charities takes in the beauty of the La Sal del Rey Salt Flats.

LEFT: Principal Laura Hollenbaugh and Head of School Dr. Christopher Hampton; leading the Mount into the future.

PHOTO CREDITS: Graduation photo (left) by Pushparaj Aitwal



Mount St. Dominic
ACADEMY

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

In the process of creating this issue of "The Mount," I found myself scrolling through images of my alma mater's 128th Commencement, getting lost in a state of reminiscence. While there were a handful of contemplative expressions along the lines of "wow, this is really happening..." overwhelmingly, the pixels were blending together, depicting happiness, awe, and excitement. Then one among them stood out, emoting a sense of sheer delight (see left).

Ms. Laura Hollenbaugh, MSDA Principal and Dr. Christopher Kennedy Hampton, MSDA Head of School, joyfully led the procession out of the athletic center having just bestowed diplomas to 73 young women.

As Dr. Hampton noted, "You 73 graduates are a powerhouse group of leaders who are going to go out and shape a changing world with grit, faith, and passion." Presiding over the second commencement in his tenure, this one was perhaps a bit tougher, with close to twice as many graduates, which meant twice as many farewells. Building bonds with students is something Dr. Hampton starts working on before the first bell rings every day - greeting students outside before being about the business of the school - informed in his actions by their spirit, hope, and promise.

On the heels of attending the leadership summit for Mount students enrolled in the L.E.O. Program, Ms. Hollenbaugh recently returned from being on a mission trip to the U.S. Mexico border, and recounted the seven days she spent in awe of the six seniors - who, with their "integrity, grace, and grit" in abundance - joined her on the important journey. "These Mount students really are truth seekers, walking the Dominican walk," she noted. "They are inquisitive, brave, and compassionate and each one is shining her light on the world around her in her own unique way."

To see beyond themselves, to have a sense of agency, to develop the confidence needed to do hard things, to be a force for good - Ms. Hollenbaugh saw in action what she, Dr. Hampton, and all the Mount faculty hope the students are learning in the classroom. The students stepped out of their comfort zones to provide aid, comfort, and compassion to the most vulnerable among us.

This is the work being done here, with the dual-leadership model allowing for excellence, creativity, and innovation. This is **The Mount!**

Sincerely,

Kate Sullivan '88
Director, Development & Alumnae Relations
Editor, The Mount

These Mount
students really
are truth seekers,
walking the
Dominican walk.

STARTING *a new* CHAPTER



From MSDA Classmates to Lifelong Sisters - the Class of 2023, Mount's Newest Alumnae

It all starts with the first day of 9th grade, a transition that could easily feel overwhelming - a sea of new faces, a labyrinth of new hallways, a two-ton backpack, and four years to go. But in the blink of an eye, around 1,300 days have passed and that 14-year old, first-year Mountie is a young woman, ready to graduate high school and head off into the world. College and beyond, Mount graduates are ready to set the world on fire.

The Mount community enjoys the chance to salute the senior class each year, honoring their individual and collective impacts, and celebrating their unique achievements. The 100 Days 'Til Graduation Assembly kicked off the Class of 2023 countdown, with the celebration ramping up again in early May with "College Sweatshirt Day," Senior Week, and ultimately, the 2023 Baccalaureate Mass and Awards Ceremony. Way to go, MSDA Class of 2023!



BACCALAUREATE AND SENIOR AWARDS

For achieving the highest honors in the Class of 2023, a gold medal was awarded to Valedictorian **Amanda Rohde '23**. Amanda also earned the EILEEN HIRCE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SCIENCES, the DONNA HAUPTVOGEL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS, and the MARY PAT EVANS AWARD. She will be attending the University of Notre Dame in the fall.

A silver medal for high achievement in the Class of 2023 was awarded to the Salutatorian, **Julia Camporeale '23**. Julia was also presented with the LINDA ARNDT AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN SOCIAL STUDIES. She will be attending George Washington University in the fall.

F. TODD MILLER AWARD: **Cara D'Angelo '23**

MSDA PARENTS' ASSOCIATION ARTS SCHOLARSHIP: **Angelina Pierro '23**

SISTER DORIS ANN BOWLES AWARD: **Saheli Davitt '23**

NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN RECOGNITION AWARD: **Morgan Brown '23** and **Reyna Gowie '23**

Finalist, 2023 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: **Amanda Rohde '23**

MSDA CLASS OF 2023

American University
Clemson University
College of New Jersey
Connecticut College
Delaware Valley University
Emory University
Fairfield University
Fordham University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Indiana University
Iona University
Lafayette College
Loyola University Maryland
Marist College
Montclair State University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Northeastern University
Pennsylvania State University
Providence College
Quinnipiac University
Ramapo College

Sacred Heart University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Seton Hall University
Siena College
Skidmore College
Susquehanna University
The New School
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of Colorado-Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Mississippi
University of Notre Dame
University of Scranton
University of South Carolina
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
Villanova University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute

73
amazing
graduates

100%
college
acceptance rate

accepted at
150
colleges and
universities

100%
attending
4-year colleges

\$18+
million
in grants
and
scholarships



being of service to others is when I really feel like I am doing my part in this weird experience we call life. Sometimes I lie to myself and tell myself I'm too busy, I'm not. Being of service provides us with purpose."

Alternating sides of the stage, the seniors stepped up to receive their diplomas from Dr. Christopher Hampton, MSDA Head of School. 73 handshakes, 73 diplomas, 73 rounds of applause. Their moment had arrived, and friends, family, faculty, staff, and students were there to cheer them on.

IN A WORD

While pondering a theme for her remarks, **Amanda Rohde**, MSDA class of 2023 Valedictorian, "jostled with lessons, metaphors, and different means of relating the lives of 73 young women to one central theme." One she knew surely did not fit, that she couldn't fathom would make sense to anyone – vestigial, something that didn't quite fully develop or once had purpose but has become useless – a concept she had uncovered while researching college essay prompts. But, was she right?

"Thus, a challenge arises in working to ensure that each of our Mount experiences do not become vestigial. Even once removed from the walls of the school, let these

shared experiences be things that still actively serve a purpose in your life. Though these purposes may be altered, given that we no longer need the Mount to introduce us to new friends or prepare us for calculus, we can find new value in the foundation with which we've been provided. We can fall back on the support of our community of friends and alumnae that have come before us. We can use the knowledge we've gained—a worldly knowledge, or maybe just a better understanding of ourselves—to guide our future actions. For years to come, we can call on the Dominican faith into which we've been welcomed to help us remember to lead with love. And so, in the evolution of our lives, our four years together can always exist with a purpose."

Seizing one final opportunity to praise the efforts and achievements of the graduates and share some thoughts on their journey ahead, Dr. Christopher Kennedy Hampton, MSDA Head of School, traveled back to his childhood for the inspiration behind his forward-looking remarks: "The Velveteen Rabbit." A small, sawdust-filled toy with an inexpensive cloth exterior gifted to a boy for Christmas, the Velveteen Rabbit questioned his worthiness amid a group of more fanciful toys

that made him feel like he wasn't "real," along with "insignificant and commonplace." It took the wise words of the well-loved and worn Skin Horse to explain that being "real" comes about through radical acceptance and love that over time shows the wear and tear of a meaningful existence.

"...Here at the Mount we have constantly emphasized the worthiness of every human being. All are welcome here. It is a motto that you need to continue on in a world that doesn't always believe so. In today's society, we tend to put a lot of importance on acting or looking in certain ways. Not only does The Velveteen Rabbit teach us that it's OK not to succumb to peer pressure, it also shows us how transitory, and ultimately unimportant, these false images are. Remember that the Rabbit becomes worn and ugly over time, but this doesn't change the boy's love for him. The same goes for all of us here today. Just as Our God has for us, there is an unconditional acceptance of you for who you are that we will always have for you."

And just like that, the Class of 2023 had completed their Mount journey. They laughed, cried, and cheered as they processed into the sunshine – emerging as the newest alumnae of Mount St. Dominic Academy.

AND JUST LIKE THAT - MSDA 2023 COMMENCEMENT

On Sunday, June 4, as a string quartet warmed up in the MSDA Athletic Center, the Class of 2023 gathered together for the final time as seniors. The time had come, and the band began to play - "Pomp and Circumstance" - signaling the beginning of the Mount's 128th commencement, and the conclusion of high school for 73 young women. At once celebratory, nostalgic, and full of emotion, "Pomp and Circumstance" starts gently, then with great crescendo ushers in a transition, a triumph, conveying the end of journey and the start of a new adventure.

After a warm welcome from Sister Marie Mueller, OP, MSDA Salutatorian **Julia Camporeale** shared a prayer for her classmates:

"As Mary, the Mother of God, is an example for all of us of unwavering

faith, I'd like to now call upon her as we embark upon this new chapter of our lives. ...Today is the culmination of years of work, years filled with challenges and triumphs, losses and laughter, friendships and growth. ... We pray that as they go forth to set the world on fire, may we remember you are in all things and all people. May we continue to challenge ourselves intellectually and share the fruit of our knowledge. May our commitment to justice lead us to make a positive difference in our world. May we build community wherever we go and remain forever the important part of our community that we are today."

Julia's prayerful themes of knowledge, service, and community were echoed by the 2023 MSDA Commencement keynote speaker, **Erin Lee Carr '06**. An award-winning documentary filmmaker working with HBO, Netflix and HULU, Erin has

justice, femininity, and the human story at the heart of her work.

"I look out at the sea of faces in front of me and I see something so magical," Erin remarked. "I bear witness to a group of people that I know are going to make this world better by being in it. But what does that mean? What is the next step in this grand adventure that is life?"

Erin offered the following as a way to start: "Study and work on the things that bring you joy and happiness. I started the film club my freshmen year (at the Mount) and I stand before you as a working and paid filmmaker. Did I ever venture that I'd get to work as a filmmaker, uhh no. But I knew learning about filmmaking made me happy and I pursued it."

Pursue passions, be an advocate for change, serve others - Erin's encouragement was rooted in Mount teachings: "I find that when I am





CELEBRATING GENERATIONAL BONDS

A familiar name. "Could it be?" In many cases it is; a Mount graduate's daughter (or granddaughter) becomes a student of MSDA. Sharing Mount sisterhood across the generations is so special, and we honor this year's graduate legacy families, from left: Jeannine and Alessandra Palumbo, Kelly and Katie King, Colleen and Erin McElroy, Keri and Meeghan Lonieski, and Kathleen and Lea Przyhocki. Families with multiple graduates are pictured below, and a special acknowledgement for Keri (McKenna) Lonieski '93 and her daughter, Meeghan '23, who is headed to Hobart and William Smith Colleges this fall.



THE PRZYHOCKI FAMILY: Caila '20, Lea '23 (who is headed to Montclair State), Sister Fran Sullivan OP '60, Kathleen Ruane-Przyhocki '91, Emma '17, along with Noreen Ruane '95 (not pictured).



THE MCELROY/OTTERBEIN FAMILY: From left to right: Mary Pat Otterbein Boutmy '85, Lynne Otterbein Fano '87, Erin McElroy '23, Colleen Otterbein McElroy '94, and Ruthann Mulhern Otterbein '60, along with Madison Otterbein '20 (not pictured).



THE PALUMBO FAMILY: Morgan '18, Jeannine (Giasullo) Palumbo '88, Alessandra '23 (who is headed to Georgetown), and Sabrina '20.



THE KING FAMILY: Emily '16, Kelly (Sullivan) King '84, and Katie '23 (who is headed to Providence College).

Baccalaureate Photos by Fred Goode

JUSTICE IN ACTION

MSDA Principal Laura Hollenbaugh and Six Mount Students Visit the U.S. Border with Mexico to Provide Compassion and Support to Refugees

Standing on the flats of La Sal del Rey (the salt of the king), a mysterious lake in Edinburg, Texas, students from the Mount (as seen on the cover) took a break from the mission work they were doing at the Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley Sacred Heart Humanitarian Respite Center (HRC), located just eight miles from the U.S. border with Mexico. With its healing powers thanks to the lake's four million tons of salt, the students, along with MSDA Principal Laura Hollenbaugh, brought prayers for healing to the journeying immigrants in desperate need of support and compassion.

For one week this summer, refugees newly released from the U.S. Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers and visiting the HRC were greeted by six Mount students

and Ms. Hollenbaugh, as well as students and teachers from MSDA sister schools Lacordaire in Montclair and St. Dominic's in Jersey City.

Each day, as many as 200 immigrants utilize the services of the HRC, often the first point of orientation and refuge within the United States. Escaping human traffickers, domestic violence, organized crime, gang violence, and extreme poverty, refugees passing through HRC find perhaps their first safe environment in weeks or months, and receive services, such as legal support, warm food and fresh water, hygiene products, warm shoes, clean clothing, shelter, medical supplies, and care, as well as transportation services. A place to feel safe, a moment to breathe, the HRC provides so much to so many, including pivotal and life-changing moments for the Mount students on mission.



Taking inspiration from the natural and raw beauty of southern Texas, from left to right are: MSDA Principal Laura Hollenbaugh and seniors Kaitlyn Ferris, Erin Murphy, Liana Gumpel, Erin Araneta, Ava Ciauro, and Gabriella Chipelo.

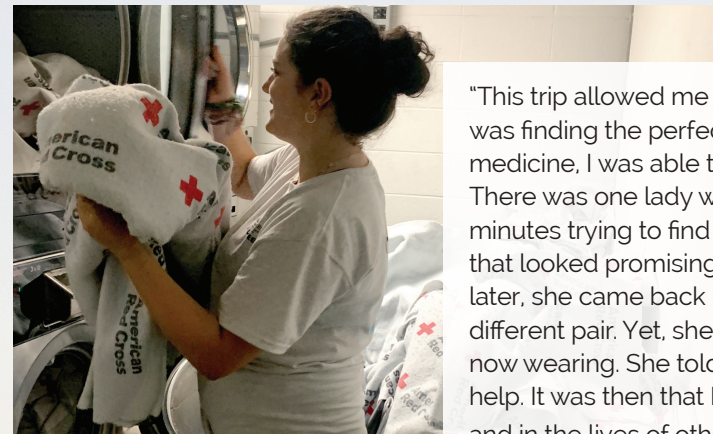
IMPACT

in their own words

The Mount students, recently back from their mission trip to McAllen, Texas, reflect on the experience of being on the front lines of the immigration

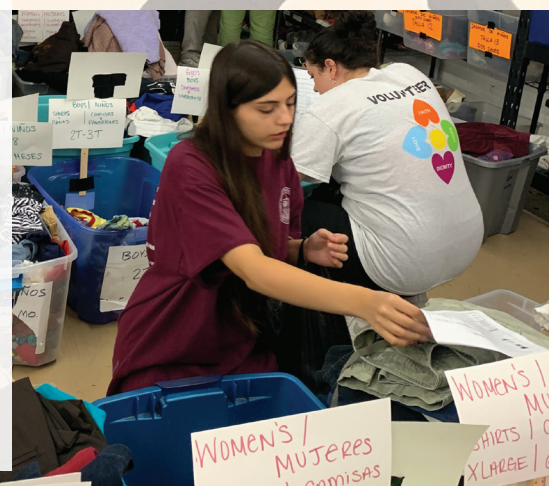
crisis, and what it meant to them to help. Reflections on this service experience and the impact felt by the students and Ms. Hollenbaugh will be shared with the school community. Please visit the Mount website for the most up-to-date news and information – www.msdacademy.org.

"Boarding the plane with no expectations of what McAllen would bring, I was full of nerves and joy. My favorite part of the trip was our evening debriefs about all of the hard work we put in that day, and sharing each other's stories and emotions. The trip continuously opened my eyes to new perspectives of people and how much they can be grateful for a simple act of kindness." – **Kaitlyn Ferris '24**



"This trip allowed me to connect with people in ways I never imagined. Whether it was finding the perfect pair of shoes for a pregnant woman or simply handing out medicine, I was able to witness firsthand the importance of human connection. There was one lady who needed leggings, and I remember spending almost 15 minutes trying to find a pair that wasn't too small for her. When I handed her a pair that looked promising, she took them and left immediately. A couple of minutes later, she came back up to me, and I was worried that she was going to ask for a different pair. Yet, she started smiling and pointed to the leggings that she was now wearing. She told me how they fit perfectly, and thanked me endlessly for my help. It was then that I truly realized the impact that we were making in that center and in the lives of others." – **Ava Ciauro '24**

"Our trip to McAllen has been one of the most perspective-altering and meaningful experiences I have had. I have learned so much about my fellow Mounties through serving others alongside them and they have truly made this trip memorable. A core memory of the week was when I played simple games with a girl when there was a lull at the hygiene station where we were working. We began by playing tic-tac-toe, however, we kept drawing ties. I wanted to play Hangman, a harder and more mentally stimulating game, but I did not know how to describe the game to her in Spanish. However, the girl began to describe Hangman in Spanish and I eagerly agreed to the game, which Gabby joined soon after. Despite the language barrier, we successfully played three rounds of the game using Spanish words and that memory has stuck with me since I left Texas." – **Erin Araneta '24**



"At the beginning of the trip, Ms. Hollenbaugh shared a quote that (MSDA teacher) **Mrs. Giampapa ('94)**, had sent to her about being given the opportunity to do hard things and rise to the challenge, and that couldn't be more right. Hard things are inevitable, and what counts is how we face them. We faced many hardships on the trip and confronted our prejudice, emotion, and lack of ability to provide service. But this experience also helped me understand the innate value and dignity of others on a deeper level as well as find the value I lacked to see in myself. I am so happy I could form unique bonds with the young women and teachers I served beside. I look forward to making connections like these in the future and the two cherries that come with it." – **Gabriella Chipelo '24**



"During my time at the Humanitarian Respite Center in Texas, it changed my perspective on the way I thought about immigration, and gave me a chance to understand the stressfulness migrants have to face just to start a new life in America. I spent most of my time at the pharmacy counter using my Spanish speaking abilities to help people who needed things from medicine to clothes. I noticed that most people came with little to nothing, not having showered in at least a few days, exhausted, and with hope that their challenging journey through the immigration process would soon be over. Every morning when I walked into that center seeing both new and old faces, I made it my personal mission to help the most people I could. Not only was I able to do this, but during my time I was able to create new bonds with the other Mount students, and also connect with myself and recognize the importance of helping others and the confidence I had gained by embracing my Cuban background." – **Liana Gumpel '24**



"This trip to the border was an amazing experience for me. I got the opportunity to connect with my peers, while helping people at the same time. It was very fulfilling. I looked forward to going to the centers each day! I loved coloring with the kids and getting to know them. It was so nice to see some of the same faces and have them recognize me from the day before. Overall, it was a great experience!" – **Erin Murphy '24**

A ROUTINE OUT AT FIRST BASE SAVES MSDA ALUMNA'S LIFE

Paying it Forward, Sarah Taffet '18 is on a Mission to Save Others

Scrolling through Instagram, as you do these days as part of any research project, it was fascinating to see that **Sarah Taffet, MSDA Class of 2018**, casually captioned a recap of the first half of her senior year at Fordham University as "an interesting semester to say the least." A swipe left revealed a dorm room shot (cute), a visit to Panera (yum), an elegant University reception (chic), and the final photo - in which Sarah had swapped her haute couture for a hospital gown (startling!). Sarah was preparing for open heart surgery at New York



Sarah Taffet playing for Fordham University: Credit: Fordham Athletics

Presbyterian / Columbia University Irving Medical Center.

The backstory to that last photo started with Sarah's return to a familiar field in Newark's Branch Brook Park for a softball tournament in the early days of her senior year at Fordham in the fall of 2021. A four-year varsity softball player at the Mount, Sarah was back in front of a hometown crowd, with former teammates, coaches, family, and friends in the stands cheering on the Rams.

Up at bat and hitting a ground ball to first base, Sarah was tagged out by the Villanova first-base player, with a clean but collision-like play. Initially rallying from the tough tag and rough landing, Sarah set off for the dugout but didn't make it back - collapsing, it turns out, from sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). Because of the swift and skilled expertise of the Fordham assistant athletic trainer Bridget Ward and four other medical professionals

who swooped in from the bleachers and nearby fields, CPR and the use of an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) saved Sarah's life.

"I initially thought I was OK, and tried to make it back to my teammates, but then everything started closing in on me, and I lost control of my body," Sarah recalled of the fateful first moments. "Next thing I remember, I woke up wondering what was going on."

The University of Washington Sports Institute reports that about 1 to 2 in every 100,000 young athletes experience a sudden cardiac arrest each year. While Sarah's near-fatal experience on the field was not without precedent, she was unaware of a congenital heart defect which caused her to become part of the 0.001-0.002% of young athletes to experience this type of trauma. After an initial health clearance, Fordham referred Sarah to NY Presbyterian for a full cardiac evaluation which uncovered a



Sarah and Damar Hamlin of the Buffalo Bills on the field at Yankee Stadium: Credit 2023 New York Yankees, Getty Images
Below, Sarah with MSDA Athletic Director Lorenzo Sozio and former teammate Julianna Kocenski '18

rare heart defect - ALCAPA: anomalous left coronary artery from the pulmonary artery.

According to her cardiologist, Sarah had luck on her side. From the tag of the Villanova player, to the preparedness of Ms. Ward who had insisted on bringing the AED to the field, to the healing hands of five individuals, to the doctors that eventually pinpointed her underlying heart defect; all of those events - in that sequence with those results - led to Sarah's life-saving surgery. If left uncorrected or unidentified, children with ALCAPA typically don't reach the age of one. Sarah was beating the odds without even knowing it.



Mountie on a Mission and on the Mound at Yankee Stadium

Less than two years later, with a championship-winning senior softball season, and both a Bachelor's in business administration with concentrations in marketing and sports business, and a Master's in media management from Fordham's Gabelli School of Business under her belt, Sarah has a new appreciation for life, and advocacy on her mind.

Swift action, CPR training, and an AED are three vital components that helped Sarah, along with Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin, live to see the other side of their mid-game cardiac arrests. As the world watched Monday Night Football in January 2023, 24-year old Damar experienced SCA and spent the next several days in the ICU. As with Sarah, Damar has been cleared to play again. But instead of picking up a softball bat or a football, this summer the two inspiring survivors joined forces to advocate for CPR education and expanded access to life-saving equipment in youth sports.

As part of the 2023 HOPE Week,

(Helping Others Preserve & Excel), Sarah joined Damar in throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at a New York Yankees game. The two athletes spent the day working with the American Heart Association to share their stories and help teach CPR to Yankee players and staff, as well as representatives from the NYC Public Schools Athletic League.

"Damar met me with kindness and open arms - he is so inspiring and I was grateful for the chance to partner with him on his mission of spreading awareness of SCA, and advocating for CPR training and greater access to AEDs," Sarah noted. "He and I share an experience that no one would ever choose, but we were the lucky ones. Skilled professionals saved our lives, but not every athlete, especially younger ones, have that immediate level of care. I am so lucky to have met Damar, to have shared that stage, and I will continue to advocate for CPR education. Remember, 15 minutes can save a life."

To learn more about how you can save a life, visit cpr.heart.org to find CPR classes near you.

#NextLevel: Mounties Past & Present



PSYCHOLOGIST AND MECCA GROUP FOUNDER - **KEISHA L. MACK, PHD** NATIONAL SECRETARY, THE BOW COLLECTIVE

Dr. Keisha L. Mack, member of the Mount Class of 1988, completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in psychology at Howard University, going on to earn her PhD in clinical psychology from The George Washington University. After completing her fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, Dr. Mack served as a counselor in several school settings, later taking on the role of Assistant Clinical Professor and Clinical Psychologist at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. In 2006, Keisha co-founded The MECCA Group in Washington, D.C. - made up of a team of professionals whose collective mission is to "improve the emotional well-being of children and families by providing client-focused and culturally relevant psychological, therapeutic and rehabilitative health services."

While continuing to provide skilled and comprehensive mental health care to children, adolescents, young adults, and their support systems throughout the Washington, D.C. area, Keisha has taken on another role as National Secretary of The BOW Collective. The Black Owner & Women's Collective is an organization and a sisterhood of 120+ black women business owners (\$500M+), part of the nation's top 1% of small businesses with revenue in excess of \$1 million, who have joined together to build the relationships, secure access to the resources, capital and contracts needed to scale their businesses. In addition to a recent meeting with Maxine Waters, the U.S. representative for California's 43rd congressional district now in her 17th term, Keisha and the members of The BOW Collective rang the bell at the NASDAQ as part of the organization's annual Capital Conversations Conference in New York City.

Keisha shared, "Upon graduating from the Mount, I had no idea what life would have in store for me; however, I knew I was well prepared. I never imagined being an entrepreneur

and running a successful business, but I am so delighted that this has been my journey. It is even more gratifying to know that my business has lead me to being a part of an organization as amazing as The BOW Collective, and to be appointed as the inaugural National Secretary. To be able to support other Black women entrepreneurs as they strive to reach new heights and to be supported in return, is a feeling that cannot be explained. While my life has been full of so many great things and blessings, I have a feeling that the best is yet to come. My only hope is that I can be a blessing and inspiration to others, especially young Black girls who could never imagine....!"



JAYDEN DESILVA, MSDA '25
HARVARD-FOCUSED YOUNG LEADERS
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

After being voted in as Student Council President of the Junior Class, it is clear, **Jayden DeSilva '25**, has leadership on her mind. So in the spring of 2023, Jayden applied for and was accepted into the "Learn with Leaders, Harvard Young Leaders certificate program." The program, operated by Learn with Leaders, connects high school students from around the world with current professors and students at Harvard who provide insights into the university's most unique courses and share the learnings directly from the classrooms and lecture halls of this esteemed university. Through a series of online seminars and workshops, Jayden had a first-hand glimpse into the "Harvard experience," and what it takes to succeed in that environment.

"It was a great honor to be selected for this program, and a reflection of the effort I have put into my studies and extracurricular activities," Jayden remarked. "The Harvard Young Leaders program has provided me with an exceptional opportunity to enhance my leadership skills and connect with like-minded individuals from around the world. I am grateful for this incredible opportunity and am determined to make the most out of it."



ALUMNAE SISTERS **DIANA AND SANDRA GONZALEZ-MORETT** BALANCE CAREGIVING, ADVOCACY, AND FILMMAKING

Producer, writer, actress, and caregiver **Diana Gonzalez-Morett '06**, along with her creative partner Akilah 'Ak' Walker, were named finalists in the NALIP (National Association of Latino Independent Producers) Latino Lens 2022: Women of Color Incubator sponsored by NETFLIX. Their short film, "Pedacito de Carne," follows the character "Sandra," a young millennial caregiver for her mother, Antonia, who is living with Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD), a rare form of dementia that typically strikes individuals in their 40s and 50s, much earlier than the more common

form of dementia, Alzheimer's. Diana is the co-founder (with Akilah) of Good Mother Films, a BIPOC, woman-led creative company with a keen eye toward the social impact of their projects. The film made its world premiere at the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival following a private screening for the Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration (AFTD).

Fellow MSDA Alumna and Diana's sister, **Sandra Gonzalez-Morett '05**, is an assistant producer and consultant

"I feel completely humbled to announce that we have made a short film that heartfully portrays the #millennialcaregiver experience, one that is universal."



for "Pedacito de Carne." Working behind the scenes of the production (which was filmed in Clifton, Roseland, Bloomfield and Belleville), Sandra's advocacy in support of raising awareness for FTD took center stage earlier this year when she served as an Ambassador at the AFTD Conference in St. Louis. As the NJ and NY ambassador for AFTD, Sandra works to raise awareness of FTD through networking, outreach and speaking engagements. She joined AFTD's National Volunteer Network in 2018, after her mother's diagnosis.

SISTER GINA SCARINGELLA JOINS IN ADVANCING THE DOMINICAN MISSION

Gina Scaringella OP, '86, along with fellow Caldwell Dominican Sisters Peggy Ann Clinton, Uchenna Okereke, and Kathleen Tuite, traveled to Columbus, Ohio for the "Creating Our Future Together" convocation. 130 Dominican sisters from different congregations as well as countries (including the Philippines, Mexico and the Dominican Republic), found strength in their shared passion for preaching, and collaborated on the important role of advancing the Dominican mission into the future.

"Our gathering this weekend was vibrant, intense, and Spirit-led. I am hopeful about the energy, wisdom, and commitment we expressed for taking the holy preaching into our future."



Anything Goes at MSDA

The 2023 MSDA Spring Musical was "Anything Goes," with music and lyrics by Cole Porter. As acted brilliantly on the stage, the story is set on an ocean liner - the S. S. American - with nightclub singer / evangelist Reno Sweeney (**Liz Forsatz '24**) traveling from New York to England, with stowaway pal Billy Croker (**Bridget Castano '24**) so he can be near his love Hope Harcourt (**Ruby Faust '23**), who is also aboard the ship but engaged to Lord Evelyn Oakleigh (**Lea Przyhocki '24**). Several madcapped characters don numerous disguises as the antics ensue. The bright costumes, delightful set, and rousing performances meant packed houses in the **Doris M. Byrne '40** Performing Arts Center as attendees experienced a night to remember.

FOXY Nominations and Awards

The 2022-23 Montclair State Theatre Night (Foxy) Award Nominations included several nods for Mount students, faculty and productions. The awards honor the accomplishments of individual achievement of both students and educators in the areas of performance, direction, design and technical theatre, as well as outstanding productions. Congratulations to everyone who contributed to these productions, from the amazing performers, to the tech crew, to Mrs. Posner, Mrs. King and Mr. and Mrs. Modero who guided the students so beautifully and artistically, encouraging them to follow their passions and be their most authentic selves. Congratulations to Mount theater students and faculty for receiving the following nominations:

- *Outstanding Achievement by a Student Costume Technician Newsies* – **Ashlyn Brooks '23, Christina Marotta '23, Cecelia Russell '23, Natalie Steele '24**
- *Comedy of Errors* – **Olivia Szumita '24, Natalie Steele '24, Cecelia Russell '23, Samantha Giampapa '25, Melia Hillman '24**
- *Outstanding Achievement in Hair and Wig Design Newsies* – **Nadia McManus-Shortt '23, Annaliese Abboud '25, Ashlyn Brooks '23, Ava Lawdanski '25, Monet Nikolic '25**
- *Outstanding Achievement by a Student Scenic Technician for a Play or a Musical Comedy of Errors* – **Molly Schweitzer '24**
- *Outstanding Achievement in New Media/Special Effects Newsies* – **Jensyn Modero**
- *Outstanding Achievement in Dramaturgy Newsies* – **Michelle Posner P '13**
- *Outstanding Achievement in Choreography in a Musical Newsies* – **Jensyn Modero**
- *Outstanding Production of a Period Musical* – Newsies
- *Outstanding Achievement by an Acting Ensemble of a Play with Elevated Language* – Comedy of Errors

AND THE FOXY GOES TO...

Outstanding Achievement by Student Costume Technicians for Newsies – **Ashlyn Brooks '23, Christina Marotta '23, Cecelia Russell '23, Natalie Steele '24**

Outstanding Achievement by a Student Scenic Technician for A Comedy of Errors – **Molly Schweitzer '23** (see right)



MSDA students perform in "Anything Goes" spring production.

Photo by Fred Goode

MSDA VARSITY SOFTBALL

For the 9th year in a row, MSDA Varsity Softball was the Super Essex Conference (SEC) American Division Champion. The team also went on to win the NJSIAA State Sectional Championship.

ALL STATE TEAM

Sydney Rosenkranz '23 and catcher was named to the All State Team, 2nd Team.

MSDA SPRING TRACK & FIELD

MSDA Spring Track took 2nd place overall at the SEC Championships / Colonial Division, with strong finishes by **Amanda Galasso '23** (2x), **Bella Dressler '25**, **Riley Merklinger '24**, and **Lorelei Middleton '25**.

ALL NON-PUBLIC TEAM

Amanda Galasso '23 - 100m Hurdles - was named to the All Non-public Team, 3rd Team. She also set a new school record in the 55m Hurdles at The Eastern States Championships. Amanda originally broke the record with a 8.75 in the trials and then broke her own record with an 8.67 in the semis!

UNICO OUTSTANDING ATHLETE

Amanda Galasso '23 was named the Mount's UNICO Outstanding Athlete Award Recipient. Amanda is a Soccer athlete and sprinter/hurdler for the Mount's Winter and Spring Track programs.

SEC BEST TEAMMATE AWARD

Keira Carbone '23 was named the Mount's Super Essex Conference Best Teammate Award Recipient! Keira is a thrower for both the Winter and Spring Track & Field programs.

ECT RUNNER UP

Riley Merklinger '24 took 2nd place at the Essex County Championships in the 100m, with a time of 12.65s

SWIMMING

NJSIAA SCHOLAR ATHLETE

Amanda Rohde '23 was named the 2023 NJSIAA Scholar Athlete Award Recipient

VOLLEYBALL

Bridget Lonergan '23 was named the KAREN FUCELLO ESSEX COUNTY SCHOLAR ATHLETE



All Athletic Photos by Jeff Stiefbold

CELEBRATIONS

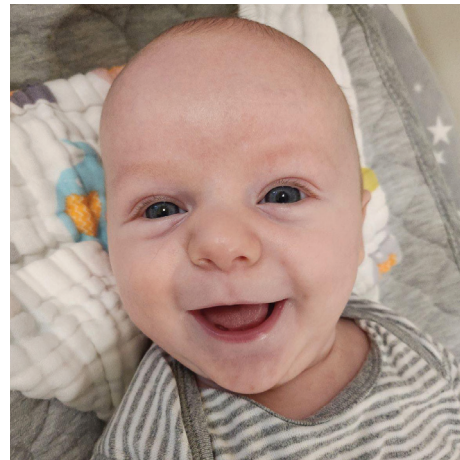
Alumnae Births & Bonds



Amanda Marie McKenna '06 and her husband Reggie Jr., welcomed Ava Isabella in June 2023, joining big brother Reggie III.



Courtney O'Reilly Briggs '10 and her husband Brandon welcomed Avery Louise in June 2023.



Kaity Rossi Kennedy '10 and her husband Mike welcomed Kieran Brian in April 2023.



Kim Hopf Soika '02 and her husband Keith welcomed Austin Julian in June 2023, joining big sister Avery, who is 5.



Amanda Paxson Best '11 and her husband Mike welcomed Jaymeson Jean in February 2023, joining big brother Patrick Michael.



Bethany Lipman Frazee '06 and her husband Ryan welcomed Aubrey Rose and Morgan Elizabeth in September 2022.



Grace Gennaro Rosa '09 and her husband Michael welcomed their son Christopher in November 2022.



Ciára McGovern '13 was married to Ryan Broesler on May 28, 2023 at the Renault Winery & Resort in Egg Harbor City. The bride's sister, fellow Mountie Maggie McGovern '23, served as the Maid of Honor.



Jamie Buonomo '11 married David Webster at The Kimpton Fitzroy London on July 22, 2023. Their first date was at a Bruce Springsteen concert in London and they continued a long distance relationship until Jamie moved to the UK. The couple is very excited to start their married life together!



Olivia Femia '17 was married to Breyden Kennedy in July 2023. After meeting at Fairfield University, the couple tied the knot with their dog, Pup, in attendance at a small, intimate engagement party turned surprise wedding in Meriden, CT. They will reside in Fairfield, CT until they move out west for more adventures.



Kerry Durkin '12 was married to Michael Violette on May 20 at the Spring Lake Golf Club. Mounties in attendance included Danielle (Sardone) Cunder '12, Elizabeth Blasko '12, Meghan McEntee '12, Mary Wojtal '12, Stephanie (Hicklin) Dockser '12, Alexa DeJoseph '12, Shona Durkin '03, Lauren (Durkin) Cifuentes '99, Mary Jane Durkin '09, Genevieve (Durkin) Amato '99, Maggie (Durkin) Shaw '02, Annie (Durkin) Alonso '04, and Patricia (Durkin) O'Sullivan '84.



Kathy Foster '81 was married to Tim Schumacher on Jun 25, 2023. Celebrating with the bride and groom on their special day were fellow Mounties Denise Erich '81, Cathy O'Brien '80, and Rosanne Vantuono Higgins '79.



Christina Sardone '09 married Rob Crocitto on July 22, 2023 at the Saint Dominic Chapel in Oyster Bay, followed by the reception at Oheka Castle in Huntington. Christina's sister Danielle Cunder '12 served as Matron of Honor, while many MSDA '09 Mounties served as bridesmaids and guests: Laura Carrione, Christina GiaQuinto, Christina Cianci, Danielle Zacoum, Katie Teesdale, Ashley Johnson, Nicole Shipitofsky, and Jessie Vallillo.



Allison Zabady '10 celebrated her marriage to Christopher Caldwell SHP '10 on April 30, 2022 at Our Lady of the Lake Church in Verona, and Stone House at Stirling Ridge in Warren, with several fellow Mounties in attendance. The couple resides in Jersey City.

IN MEMORY

The Mount St. Dominic Academy community extends its deepest sympathy to the loved ones of alumnae, family, and friends who have been called home to God. Submit the names of loved ones for special remembrance by the MSDA community on All Saints Day at www.msdacademy.org/support/prayer-intentions.

MSDA Alumnae
Victoria M. Bottone Aloia '90
Claire Taravella Barile '64
Silvia Dachisen '60
Joan Anne Keegan '69
Andrea Kilby '94
Grace Moore '59

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Sister Patricia Daly, OP
Sister Ines Marie DiBonaventura, OP (formerly Sister Inez Raymond)
Sister Catherine Gerard Kirchner, OP
Sister Mary Ann O'Connor, OP
Sister M. Veritas Picardi, OP

Family
Edward "Ted" Warner Allen, III, husband of Kathleen O'Dowd Allen '69

James A. Anderson, husband of Adele L. Abrams '70
Mary Ann Augusta, mother of Gina Augusta Whelan '82
Rosemary Gaffney Bushwell, mother of Kathleen Bushwell Fordyce '82

Mary T. Christoforo, mother of Diane Christoforo '01
John Cohrs, father of Kathleen Falvey '95
Mrs. Eileen Condon, mother of Mary Catherine Callaghan '83 and Eileen Kohaut '86

Gary J. Della Volpe, brother of Cynthia (Anthony) Della Volpe '80
Ilse DePaolo, former MSDA Faculty

Joseph Polibio Diaz Sr., father of Samantha Diaz '19
Dino A. Favetta, father of Christine Favetta '05 and Nicole Fallacaro '07

Maria Grieco, mother of Annamarie Grieco Contella '87 and Gabriella Grieco Stiefbold '89
Patrick Dominic McGinley, Sr., father of Eileen McGinley Hannaford '87

J. Michael Nolan Jr., brother of Susan Nolan '74
Lorenzo "Larry" Petrucci, father of Sabrina Petrucci Chris '87

Carol A. Ping, mother of Noel Thompson Young '96
Joseph Julio Rachiele, son of Julia Rachiele '65

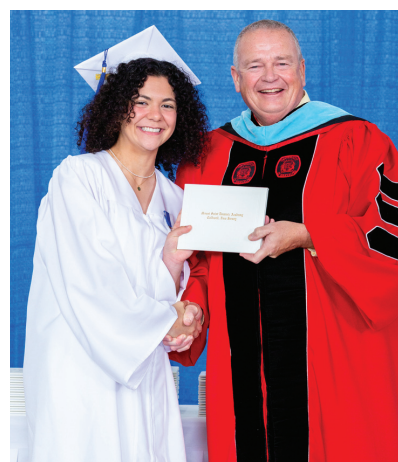
Thomas John "T.J." Sullivan, brother of Kelly King, '84, and uncle of Emily '16, and Katie '23

Concetta "Connie" Toscano, mother of Vickie Toscano Reilly '73

John J. White, father of Jaime Robitaille '99



ENJOY A FURTHER GLIMPSE
INTO THE JOY OF THE 2023 MSDA
COMMENCEMENT



MSDA Class of 1973
50th Reunion Weekend
SAVE THE DATE!!
October 27-29, 2023

Contact msdclassof1973@gmail.com for
full details. See you in October!

THE MOUNT FUND

It is with sincere gratitude that we thank the community of Mount St. Dominic Academy for your extreme generosity, loyalty to our mission, and belief in our students. Your gifts to **The Mount Fund 2022-23** enabled the faculty and staff to remain laser-focused on the one thing that matters the most at MSDA - the students. And they are thriving, carrying each of you with them on their Mount journeys of self discovery.

You were with them on field trips to the Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians in Philadelphia and the New York Historical Society. You were with them in the L.E.O. classroom while they learned how to create socially-conscious businesses. You were with them when they joined the Sisters of St. Dominic to celebrate Earth Day, taking inspiration from Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si.

You are with them in the spaces, in the lessons, and in the relationships that are informing their passions and helping them grow. You are with them during their challenges and triumphs. You are with them when they pray. And you are with them when they graduate, prepared to live lives of purpose - as Saint Catherine would say, ready to set the world on fire. You are with them - yesterday, today, and tomorrow - because there is no Mount without You.

The Mount Fund 2023-24 will officially kick-off on October 1, 2023. Stay tuned for more information.



THE MOUNT FUND 2022-2023

WE ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT A PREVIEW OF OUR 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT.

It is with great appreciation that we recognize the generosity of those who have contributed to The Mount Fund annual fund campaign. This list has been prepared to ensure the accuracy of the information. Please accept our apologies for any errors and email corrections to ksullivan@msdacademy.org.

The gifts listed below were compiled as of June 30, 2023. A complete Annual Report will be posted online in Fall 2023.

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