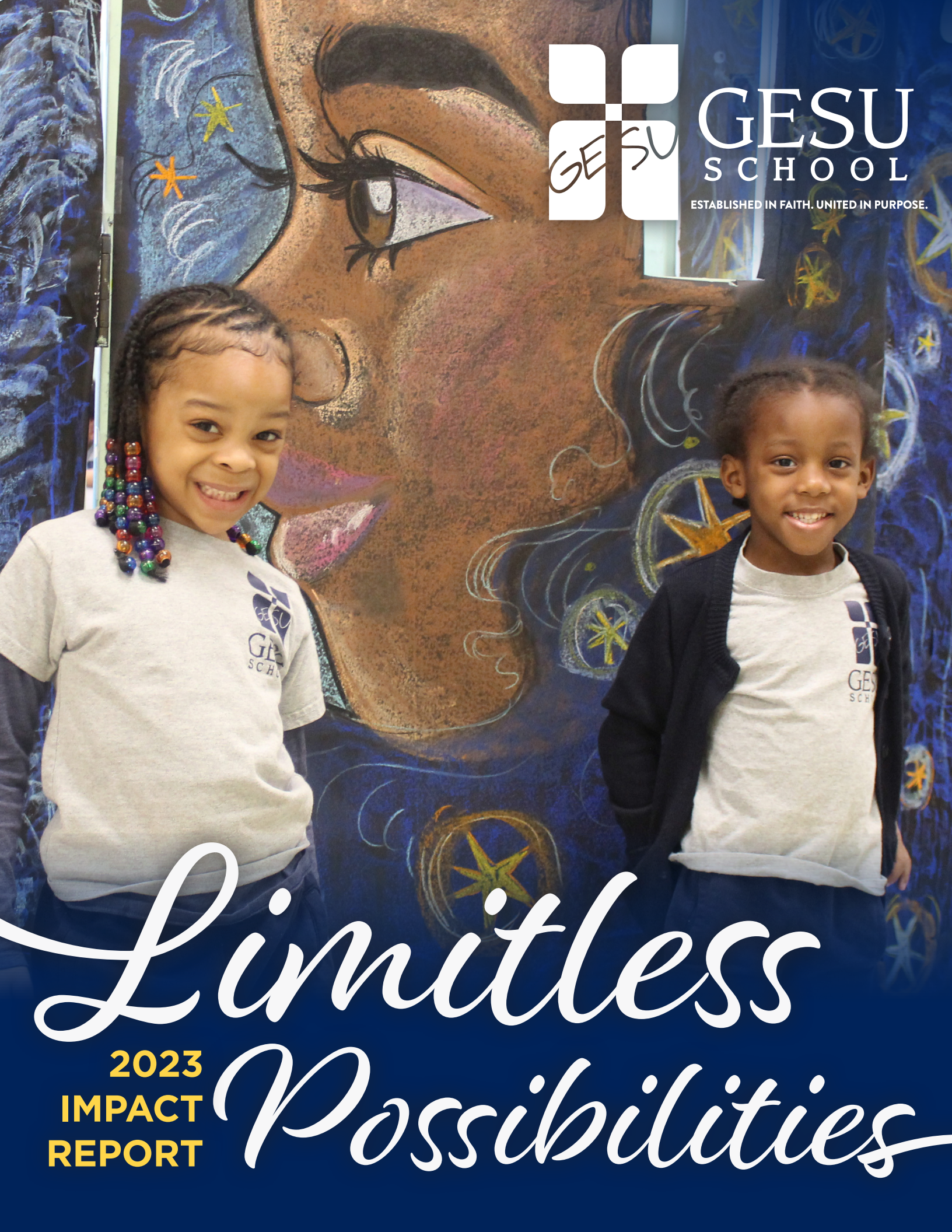


GESU SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED IN FAITH. UNITED IN PURPOSE.

Limitless Possibilities

2023 IMPACT REPORT

From the President



Dear Friends of Gesu School,

A Gesu education establishes the foundation for a life of limitless possibilities. Co-directed by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) and the Jesuits, Gesu provides comprehensive, innovative Catholic education to 400 students that empowers them to transcend all forms of poverty.

Gesu's dedicated faculty and staff embrace a student-centered approach and care deeply for our Pre-K–8th graders and their families. Our curriculum abides by the IHM tenet that "every child can learn," meeting the needs of remedial to advanced learners. In the Jesuit tradition, Gesu nurtures the whole person through health and wellness programs; co-curricular opportunities; and partnerships with arts, civic, and cultural institutions. Our soft skills curriculum fosters the grit, self-esteem, and empathy that propel students to engage positively in their communities.

While Gesu students confront significant challenges that accompany poverty, Gesu guides them to envision strong aspirations and know that they can attain them. Gesu alumni demonstrate that our approaches to education work; they are confident, kind, and poised to overcome obstacles.

Each year, Gesu fundraises 85% of our operating budget to deliver the academic, social, and spiritual resources for our students to maximize their potential. We thank our supporters, who make a Gesu education possible: board members, sponsors, foundations, corporations, individual donors, volunteers, and families. Their generosity impacts students each day!

The pages that follow share our community's voices and highlight how Gesu empowers our students to believe in limitless possibilities. We hope you find these stories inspiring.

With gratitude,

Bryan H. Carter
President and CEO

P.S. I invite you to stay current on Gesu news and experience our community in action. Visit our new website gesuschool.org. To schedule a tour or conversation, contact the Development Office at 215-763-9077 or development@gesuschool.org.

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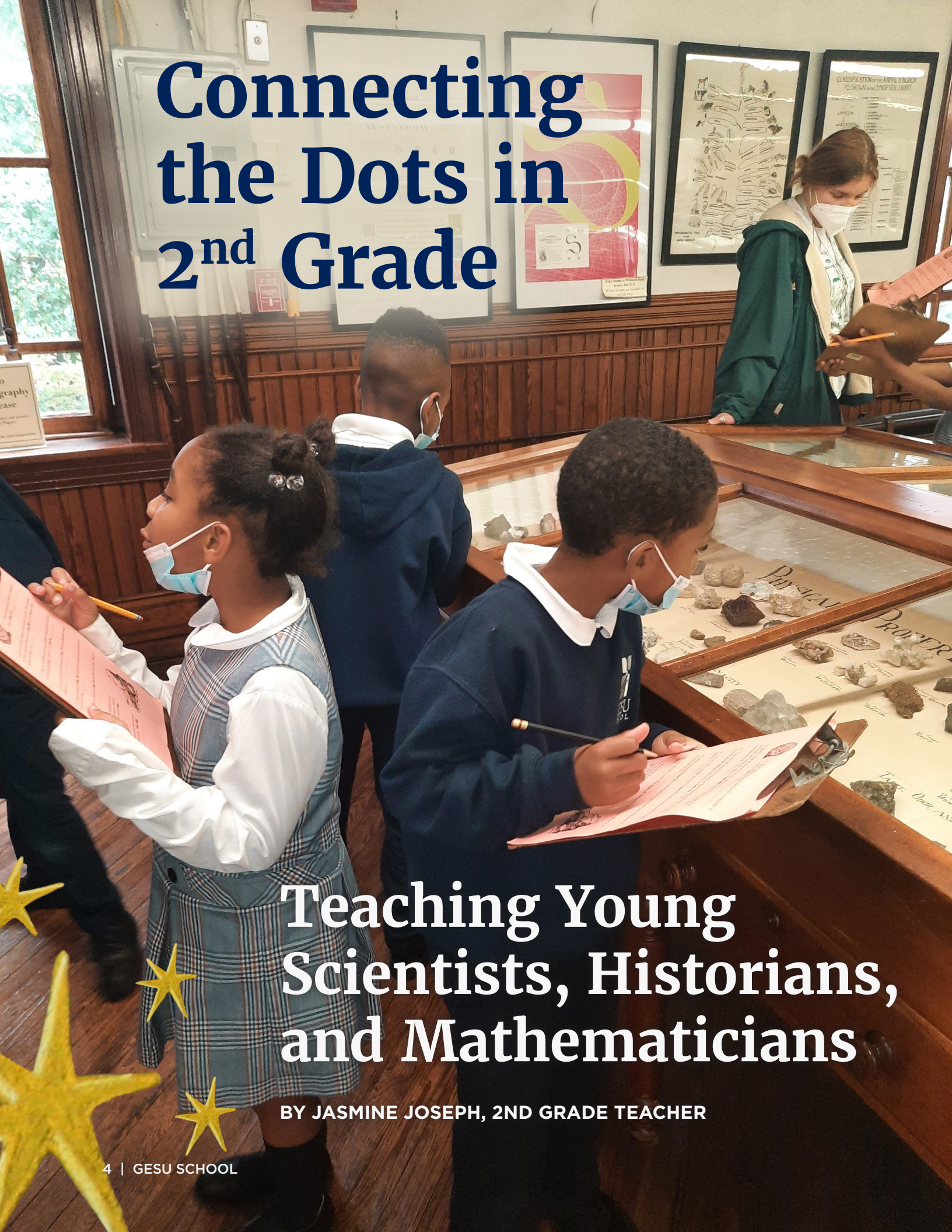
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Thank you to our generous donors, who continue to be "people for others" for Gesu.

Front Cover Photo and Below: "We Are Our Ancestors' Wildest Dreams" mural created by Art Teacher and alumna Bria Hawkins '09 to inspire students during Black History Month.



Connecting the Dots in 2nd Grade



Teaching Young Scientists, Historians, and Mathematicians

BY JASMINE JOSEPH, 2ND GRADE TEACHER

(Left) Second graders enjoy a scavenger hunt for rocks and minerals at the Wagner Museum.



Jasmine Joseph

2nd Grade Teacher
and Basketball Coach

B.A. Anthropology,
Howard University '14

M.S. Reading Specialist,
Saint Joseph's University '20

"Working at Gesu School is meaningful to me because I am able to be a part of a community that actively seeks to educate and empower the whole child. It is my hope that my students find their voices and help others find theirs so that we live in a more caring and accepting society."

Graduations are milestones that signify the end of a phase and the beginning of a new journey. As a 2nd Grade teacher, I understand the developmental changes that students go through as they end their primary years and enter the intermediate grades. That change is like a graduation and should be celebrated. When a student transitions from 2nd to 3rd grade, it is a major shift. At Gesu, it is the first year that students are in all boys' or all girls' classes. They are graded on all core subjects, including science and social studies. They are officially "big kids."

It takes more than just academics to grow minds. While I plan academic lessons weekly, a lot of what I do is teaching growth mindset through Gesu's soft skills curriculum. In 2nd grade, students develop independence, self-control, and empathy. I explicitly teach these soft skills in spiritual, social, and academic contexts and with a framework of skills and tools for social emotional learning.

At Gesu, our students have the opportunity to explore their environment, embrace their culture, and collaborate as they grow. I am excited to share some of our 2nd grade scholars' milestones. These represent the foundation of academic and social emotional growth that make this year of transition so special.

Embracing Connections…

…with the Environment

During my first year at Gesu, I was so impressed with our partnership with GeoKids. The Wagner Free Institute of Science of Philadelphia offers in-class, hands-on science lessons that allow students to learn and interact with their environment. We studied rocks and minerals, life cycles, and pollination and pollinators.

Wagner's teachers brought museum samples and household items to create memorable learning experiences and engage students in looking at life around them as scientists. For one experiment, students observed minerals in cereal flakes using magnets. They also made apple sauce to learn about matter and irreversible change. Students became immersed in learning through creative lessons that encouraged collaboration, exploration, and problem solving. I saw my students' curiosity and self-discipline grow.

In addition to hands-on lessons, the Wagner sponsors four field experiences. At the Wagner Museum, students participated in scavenger hunts exploring artifacts and minerals. They visited the Franklin Institute to explore states of matter and the Norris Square Neighborhood Gardens to discover how plants and pollinators help our world grow. These Gesu partnerships develop the whole child by connecting classroom concepts to real-world field experiences.



…through Cultural Exploration

Gesu embraces and showcases Black excellence like no other school. At Gesu, Black culture is affirmed daily. Students are immersed in their culture through multiple subject areas, faith, the art in the hallways, and school-wide announcements on Black history facts.

One of my best moments at Gesu was winning the Black History Month door decorating contest. Each Gesu class participates in this research project. I taught 2nd graders about great figures like Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Shirley Chisholm, and Jessie Owens—their values and struggles and how those connect to students' lives. They had great dreams and aspirations. They also demonstrated soft skills, just like those we teach in our soft skills MAGIS curriculum: Motivation, Awareness, Grit, Independence, and Social competence. The theme of "We Are Our Ancestors' Wildest Dreams" came into fruition. Students chose a Black pioneer to research and include on the door. They shared their own aspirations, too. When our class was named a winner, pride and joy filled our room!

To bring Black history to life, both 2nd grade classes worked with the 7th grade on a living "Blacks in Wax" museum. The older students helped 2nd graders research and design posters of Black role models. Second graders dressed as historical figures and, with their 7th grade helpers, presented their posters to the school. That day was the culmination of Black History Month and the exclamation point on a month full of pride. Throughout this process, the older students' leadership and patience was inspiring. The 2nd graders displayed more maturity and independence.

(Left) Second graders learned about parts of plants and brought concepts to life by making a salad with every plant component: seeds, fruit, roots, stems, and leaves.







...by Collaboration

The 100th day of school is a true celebration for primary-level students. All year, students grow their understanding of "base ten math," so excitement builds towards the 100th day.

My 2nd graders strutted the hallways with their 100th day of school themed t-shirts and crowns and showcased their enthusiasm for school and their growth. However, one student came to school with a blank t-shirt, feeling sad that he couldn't decorate his with one hundred objects, like his classmates. My students, without any prompting, gathered around his desk and began decorating his shirt with anything they could find.

This simple moment was truly a highlight. I felt so proud of my students for working collaboratively, so their classmate could feel happy and included. I was amazed at this student-led interaction. This simple and pure moment exemplified the MAGIS principles that all Gesu teachers and I work to instill within our students.





Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce

THE MIRACLE ON 17TH STREET

Campaign Secures $15.6 Million for Gesu's Future

To invest in our students, faculty, staff, and our entire community, Gesu announces that we have completed a $15+ million campaign, the largest in school history. We are filled with gratitude!

The campaign launched in early 2019. Despite the deep challenges of a global pandemic and its enduring effects on our city and neighborhood, Gesu's trustees, administration, and loyal supporters persisted.

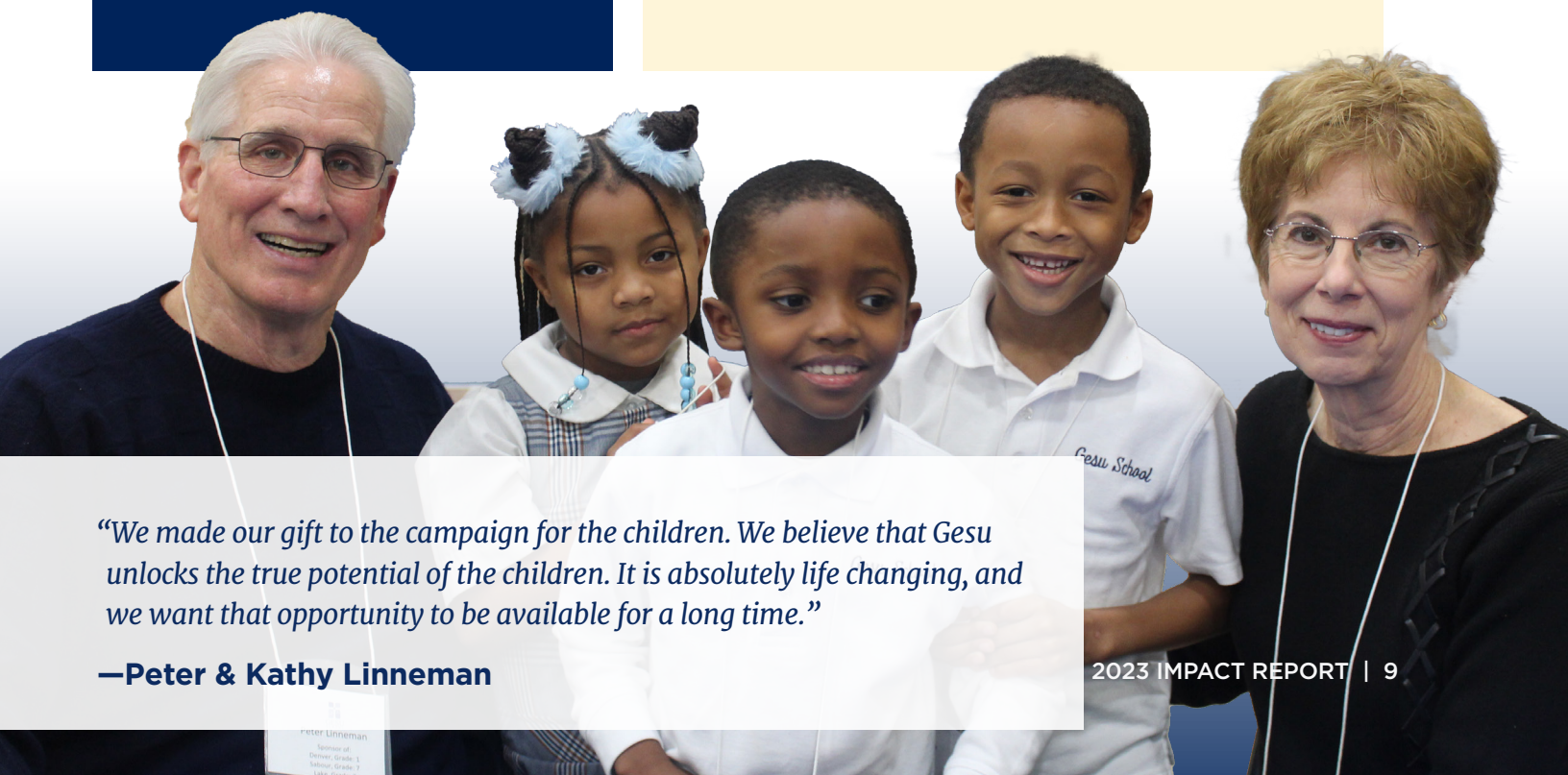
The individuals and foundations who contributed funds will ensure that Gesu remains a steadfast presence in our North Philadelphia community and that students have access to the resources and holistic education that will empower them to realize their full potential.

Campaign Objectives

- Ensure Gesu's enduring excellence by growing our endowment
- Maintain the safety and comfort of our learning environment through a new capital reserves fund
- Enhance academic and programmatic services for our students and families through bold strategic initiatives

Campaign Highlights

- Building the endowment, Gesu's top campaign priority, secures a financial base that will assure the sustainability of our core programs.
- Peter and Kathy Linneman committed the largest bequest in Gesu School's history ($2 million).
- The Maguire Foundation provided a $1.25 million matching commitment, which resulted in $2.5 million in new endowed scholarships for Gesu's students now and in the future.
- Campaign gifts directed for strategic initiatives have already been implemented. Gesu has installed more robust security upgrades and systems.
- Campaign funds have enhanced ongoing programming. The Connelly Foundation's grant added a Math Specialist to our faculty to lead a pilot program in state-of-the-art math curriculum practices.
- Longtime Gesu Trustee, Peter Gould, and his wife, Robin Potter, committed to extend their funding of our Graduate Support Program for another five years, so the path to success for alumni continues throughout high school and beyond.



"We made our gift to the campaign for the children. We believe that Gesu unlocks the true potential of the children. It is absolutely life changing, and we want that opportunity to be available for a long time."

—Peter & Kathy Linneman

"We started this campaign in July of 2019. Nine months later a global pandemic was declared. Gesu's board, leadership, and devoted donors showed amazing determination to bring The Miracle on 17th Street Campaign over the finish line —that's philanthropy in action!"

—Rob Weinstein,
Vice President
of Institutional
Advancement



Endowment for the Principal's Position

Founding Principal Sister Ellen Convey, IHM has devoted her life's work to nurturing thousands of North Philadelphia's children. These gifts will ensure sustainable leadership into the future and honor Sr. Ellen's legacy and impact.

Endowment for Sponsor a Child Scholarships

The annual cost to educate a child at Gesu School is more than $16,000, but most families are able to pay only a fraction of the $10,000 stated tuition. Gesu provides over $3 million each year in financial aid—all of which is raised from donors. To secure the future of our financial aid program, Gesu has established 25 new, permanent endowments for scholarship funding.

Endowments for People and Programs

GESU LEGACY FUND This unrestricted endowment will give Gesu flexibility to fund our most urgent needs as they arise.

FACULTY SUPPORT ENDOWMENT Gesu is dedicated to faculty retention and to supporting our teachers in their transformative work. Endowed support for faculty compensation and benefits will enable Gesu to attract and retain top-tier educators and provide critical ongoing, cutting-edge professional development.

MISSION AND MINISTRY ENDOWMENT Gesu School is proud of our Catholic identity and continually works to infuse religious education and spirituality into our daily activities. In 2018, we established a dedicated Mission and Ministry department to promote our community's spiritual well-being. The department also works with our counseling team to directly support our families as they face the challenges of living in deep poverty. The department shares resources with families in emergency situations, such as periods of being unhoused, experiencing food insecurity, or needing assistance with utility bills.

Capital Reserves and Strategic Initiatives Fund

The original portions of Gesu's building, which first housed St. Joseph's College and later St. Joseph's Prep, are 100 years old as of 2023. Our building requires a number of upgrades to ensure efficiency and the continued safety, health, and comfort of students, faculty, and staff. The Capital Reserves Fund will address critical needs over the next five years and beyond, including enhanced security, an overhaul of the HVAC system, continued environmental maintenance, and the potential for expansion.

Additionally, gifts directed towards a variety of academic and programming strategic initiatives will help to further enhance Gesu School's services to our children and their families.



Gesu School is honored to recognize the following individuals and foundations for their contributions to *The Miracle on 17th Street: A Campaign to Secure Gesu's Future.*

Anonymous
Eni Bakallbashi (in Memory of William Brill)
Scott Beaumont
The Estate of Jack Bogle
Jim and Diane Brecker
Bryan and Joan Carter
Connelly Foundation
John and Jennifer Curry
Tad and Candy Decker
Detwiler Family Foundation
Jack and Tammy Dodds
Jack and Gloria Drosdick
The Estate of Louise Dubin
Jeffrey Ehret (in Memory of Vivienne Ehret)
Lawrence Flick, IV
Tim and Ellen Foster
Peter Gould, Ph.D., and Robin Potter
James F. '45 and Donna Higgins
Kate Hovde and Ken Kulak
The Howley Family Foundation
Aram and Jackie Jerrehian
Jesuits USA East Province
Peter and Kathy Linneman
Karen and Kevin Lucey
The Maguire Foundation
Bob and Ann McAlaine
The Estate of William McAlaine
Pat and Marie McCormick
M & S Foundation (Al & Aline Martinelli and Susan Martinelli Shea)
The Estate of John B. Neff
Steve Piltch and Sunny Greenberg
Greg Rigdon and Molly Murphy
Frank and Kathy Seidman
Daryl Shore '94
Candace Stack and Travis Whitten (in Memory of Suzanne Stack)

Gesu extends our sincere thanks to our campaign volunteers for their dedication and leadership.

Campaign Chairs

Keith Pension
Susan Martinelli Shea
Daryl Shore '94

Honorary Chairs

Rev. George W. Bur, S.J.
Winston J. Churchill, Esq.
Robert M. McAlaine
Mark Solomon

The Miracle ON 17TH STREET
A CAMPAIGN TO SECURE GESU'S FUTURE

For information about ways of giving, contact:
Rob Weinstein Vice President of Institutional Advancement
215-763-9077 | rob.weinstein@gesuschool.org | gesuschool.org/donate



Ryan Hooper

7th Grade Teacher & Basketball Coach

BY AILEEN MOORE, ADVANCED WRITING TEACHER

"Ryan is an excellent teacher. He believes that all students deserve a high-quality education and works hard to ensure all students are learning every day. He spirals material, so students can recall skills. He constantly collects data to better his teaching and cater lessons to students' needs. Ryan's impact extends beyond the classroom."

—Taylor Klein,
Advanced Math Teacher

"Mr. Hooper is dedicated to providing students with the best opportunities."

—Azarael '24

The 2023 recipient of the Steven Scott & Linda Bradley Teacher Appreciation Award reflects on service and student-centered instruction.

Coming to Gesu School is a full-circle moment for Ryan Hooper, a Howley Scholar alumnus and graduate of Villa Angela-St. Joseph in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2011. After three years in the Army as a Field Artilleryman in the 82nd Airborne Division, Ryan earned a B.A. in History from Marquette University in 2016. He furthered his studies with an M.S. in Education from John Hopkins University in 2018. Ryan has continued his dedication to the Army as a Civil Affairs Military Government Specialist in education and the first Army officer to be commissioned to this role. He served as a Teach for America volunteer in Baltimore. On top of his challenging Gesu workload teaching math to 7th and 8th graders and English language arts to 7th grade boys, Ryan is a dedicated varsity boys basketball team coach, student council coordinator, and the recipient of the 2023 Steven Scott and Linda Bradley Teacher Appreciation Award for his dedication to students.

Teacher Feature

How would you describe your teaching philosophy and style?

My responsibility is to guide and develop students so that they are prepared to be responsible, active citizens in society, equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life. I look to provide a curriculum that includes mirrors and windows: mirrors in that students see themselves and their community in a meaningful way and windows in that they also see outside to the rest of the world. I strive to provide a rigorous academic experience while maintaining a holistic approach that develops the whole person. I hold high expectations for myself and my students, endlessly striving for ways to support them to ensure they reach their full potential.

What inspires you about teaching middle school at Gesu? What are the hallmarks of 7th grade in your class?

Gesu is a magical place to work that brings joy and meaning to me in a way that most schools don't. Through our steadfast leadership, experienced educators, and mission-driven approach, we're able to provide a high-quality education to students in North Philadelphia. Our students bring a love of learning to school. Our families bring an unmatched, strong commitment to their children's education.

Middle school students bring a high level of energy and curiosity to class daily. There are no boring days while teaching middle schoolers. I love to use and channel their enthusiasm in a positive manner that advances their learning.

In my classroom, we have a variety of unique activities, including regular math competitions, such as March MATHness, to improve math fluency, and kindness initiatives to promote positive interactions among students. At the end of every trimester, I meet individually with students to discuss their progress on our five MAGIS principles for developing their soft skills: Motivation, Awareness, Grit, Independence, and Social competence.

Service—both as a teacher and in the military—is a prominent theme in your life. What motivates you to serve?

One of the greatest injustices and most urgent concerns of our country is our failure to provide equal opportunities for young people to succeed in school and life. This is what keeps me up at night and motivates me daily to serve this critical mission.



As a Civil Affairs Officer in the military, I advise battlefield commanders on international education-related matters by conducting research, building partnerships, and providing solutions. This requires me to be called to duty for one weekend a month and two weeks out of the year.

How has being an alumnus of the Howley Scholars Program impacted you? How is it now meaningful to work with Howley Scholars at Gesu?

As a Howley Scholar, I had the privilege of having someone believe in me enough to invest in my education. As a teacher now, I hope to translate that same strong belief into my current students and their education.

The Gesu School – St. Joseph's Prep Howley Scholars Program, initiated in 2022–23, expands opportunities for five young men starting in 6th grade. It furnishes financial and programmatic support that will provide a pathway to attending the Prep for high school. The partnership offers the potential for a life-changing seven-year commitment to supporting students' education and represents the first of its kind in the schools' longstanding history. The Howley Foundation believes that the best way to create social and economic mobility and improve lives is to provide quality educational opportunities.

Your generosity enables teachers to impact a generation.

Student Gallery

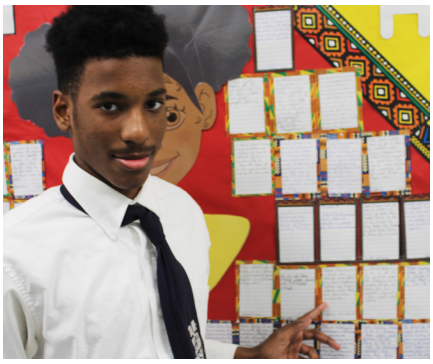
"Rooted in the Past — Growing in the Future" Quilt

By Gesu Middle School

Eighth Grade Teacher Annette Pickett (left) and Advanced Writing Teacher Aileen Moore (right) constructed a collaborative Black History Month quilt. Each middle school student created a block to reflect on what the commemoration means.

Gesu teaches the history and significance of culture and nurtures our students' pride in and respect for their own heritage and others'.





"Black History [Month] is a time to celebrate and reflect on our ancestors, when we learn about what they did for our community." **—Cayden '23**



"Black history, to me, is the history of me, from my cocoa-buttered skin, to my melanin from within. To the ones that came before and led us through the door. The door that has led us to be free, some way, somehow, they opened a door without a key, and that's what Black history means to me." **—Ariel '24**





Middle School Murals

Gesu middle school students created mosaics celebrating Black role models and learned about their contributions. Jacob '26 (left) depicts actor Chadwick Bozeman. Zuri '26 (right) reenacts poet Amanda Gorman's inauguration reading.

Visit Gesu School's social media pages and YouTube Channel to enjoy musical selections and other student presentations. youtube.com/gesuschoolworks

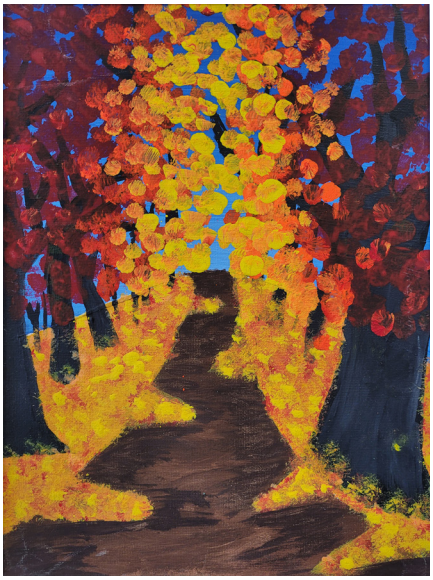
Poetry by Gesu Advanced Writing Students

"What I Carry"
By: Azarael '24

I carry ambition
I carry excellence
I carry friendship
I carry intelligence
I carry talent
I carry hard work
I carry love
I carry happiness
Yet
I carry loneliness
I carry sadness
I carry sacrifice
I carry pain
I carry hesitance
Still
I carry perseverance
I carry determination
I carry aptitude
I carry vitality
I carry fate



"Moonlight Lake," Acrylic Paint on Canvas by Patyence '23



"Autumn Path," Acrylic Paint on Canvas by Tamia '23

Students learned about atmospheric perspective and the elements of landscape, using light and shadows and basic principles of proportions to make a painting dynamic.

"I Trust"
By Destini '25

I trust that I will have good grades
I trust that God will make a way
I trust in the people I love
I trust that I will be the best that I will be
I trust in the teachers that are willing to help me grow
I trust we should believe in each other
I trust in myself everyday
I trust that I will succeed in cheer
I trust that I will be multi-talented
I trust that I will be great
I trust that I won't let people disturb my peace
I trust in my dreams
I trust that I will have no regrets
I trust that happiness is key
I trust in everyone around me



"Dove Stained Glass," Watercolor on Paper by Brielle '23

Students studied stained glass work in Gothic cathedrals and learned to incorporate gradients to create a fractured look.

Alumni Accolades

Amira ’15

Medical Student, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine ’27

Saint Joseph’s University ’23, *Cum Laude*, Full Scholarship

Archbishop John Carroll High School ’19, Tommy Bright and Lenfest Scholarships through Gesu and Maguire Scholarship



“The academic knowledge and interpersonal skills I acquired at Gesu set me up for all of my future success. I built meaningful relationships with fellow students, past teachers, and mentors. All of the faculty and staff at Gesu remain invested in their students’ success, even after graduation. That is what makes Gesu such an amazing school. I know if there’s anything I ever need, whether it be exposure to resources, networking opportunities, or mentorship, Gesu’s doors are always open. I am forever grateful to be a member of the Gesu School family.”



Desmond ’02

Gesu Trustee

Underwriting Specialist, Liberty Mutual

Saint Joseph’s University, B.S. Actuarial Science ’10 and M.S. Elementary Education ’12

St. Joseph’s Preparatory School ’06

“Gesu is the school that continually looks out for its students. The administration will use its resources to find a way to help current students and alumni reach both personal and professional goals. I was able to secure my first internship in college because of Gesu. Why wouldn’t I want to give back and return the gifts that were given to me?”

Graduate Support Program News

Launched in 2016, the Peter Gould & Robin Potter 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 and assures alumni that Gesu will always be their home.



Gesu 8th graders at a Lunch-and-Learn high school session. Gesu brings admissions teams directly to our students through this robust program.

Welcome to our new GSP staff!



Di'anna Thomas-Palmer
Director, Graduate Support Program

Hofstra University '16, B.S. Public Relations

Temple University '20, M.S. Sports Business



DeNisa Sondai
Assistant, Graduate Support Program and Counseling Department

Saint Joseph's University '23, B.S. Psychology

2023 Highlights

- The **Gesu High School Fair** welcomed 100+ students and families to interact with **32 high schools**, including independent/private, Catholic, boarding, and military schools.
- **Three Parent Academy courses** for both 7th and 8th grade families covered: high school fit and selection; test preparation; the application process; and financial aid and scholarships.
- **Lunch-and-Learn Sessions** presented by **20 high school admissions offices** throughout the fall months introduced students to opportunities for their future.
- Ongoing **outreach to alumni** included six visits to local high schools and colleges.

Class of 2023 High School Selections

as of June 2023

Academies at Roxborough High School
Archbishop John Carroll High School
Archbishop Wood High School
The City School
Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School
Franklin Towne Charter High School
La Salle College High School
Liguori Academy
Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls
Mercy Career & Technical High School
Monsignor Bonner & Archbishop Prendergast High School
Mount Saint Joseph Academy
Odessa High School (Delaware)
Philadelphia Electrical & Technology Charter High School
Roman Catholic High School
School of the Future
The Shipley School
SS John Neumann-Maria Goretti High School
St. Joseph's Preparatory School
Vaux Big Picture High School
West Catholic Preparatory High School



Members of the Gesu Alumni Council return to support their community at the Gesu MLK Day of Service.

Are you a Gesu graduate?

For more information on the Graduate Support Program, including Gesu reunions, college admissions resources, and career networking, contact Director Di'anna Thomas-Palmer at 215-763-3660 or dianna.thomas-palmer@gesuschool.org. To update your contact information and share your story, visit gesuschool.org and click "The Gesu Difference."

@GesuGradSupport
gesuschool.org/ the-gesu-difference

Gesu High School Alumni Council

The inaugural council launched in 2020 to:

- Maintain consistent relationships with current Gesu alumni throughout their high school years, allowing for more accurate data collection, consistent advising, and a stronger connection to Gesu.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Support current Gesu students as they look towards high school.
- Build a sense of community and commitment to Gesu through volunteerism and fundraising.

Founding Members:

Dhmyni '17
Andre'a '18
Manaii '18
Adrian '19
Alphonso '19
Faith '19
Makayla '19
Nateerah '19
Maurisha '20

Memorable Moments
from 2022–2023

August

Our **Gesu and St. Joseph's Prep** communities joined together for our annual **back-to-school** event. Families enjoyed a picnic, games, and music. Special thanks to the Prep and **Cradles to Crayons** for donating more than 200 backpacks with school supplies for Pre-K–8th graders, to the Prep students for organizing fun activities, and to community partners for sharing resources.

September

Gesu and St. Joseph's Prep are grateful to the **Howley Foundation** for a **more than $1.2 million combined gift** to the schools to create a Scholars Program that provides Gesu students access to resources and support to be able to continue their academic careers at the Prep and beyond.

Prep President John Marinacci and Gesu President and CEO Bryan Carter announced in a joint statement: "The Howley's belief that education is the way to transform the lives of young people and, in turn, the world, aligns perfectly with our missions as well. We are confident that this innovative educational collaboration will impact the trajectory of students' lives and empower them to develop their strengths, overcome challenges, and become engaged members of the community."

October



Gesu School welcomed **Archbishop Nelson Pérez** to celebrate Mass in the Church of the Gesu. Students from the Gesu Catholic Student Union assisted the Archbishop with the liturgy. The Gesu Gospel Choir led our community in song. We thank Archbishop Pérez for guiding us in prayer and for sharing his inspiring words during this joyful visit! The Mass was highlighted in a *Catholic Philly* photo feature. Watch a video of the Gesu Gospel Choir at **youtube.com/gesuschoolworks**.

Gun Violence Prevention

Gesu joined neighboring schools and organizations, **Girard College, St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, St. Joseph's Prep, and Old St. Joseph's Church,** to collaborate with education, legislative, and religious leaders to curb gun violence. Following a **press conference with 6abc Action News, CBS3 Philadelphia, Fox 29 News, and NBC 10 News,** and alongside our **community partners and the Philadelphia Police Department,** Gesu co-sponsored **two gun buyback events** to help build a safer community for our students and families. Gesu is committed to building a hope-filled future for our North Philadelphia community. View media coverage at **youtube.com/gesuschoolworks.** Click "Press Conference News Coverage, Oct. 18, 2022."



In the spring, Gesu again partnered with St. Joseph's Prep to bring the **Memorial to the Lost** to our community as a **space for prayer, reflection, and awareness**. This installation, created by the **Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence** organization, was part of our ongoing efforts to collaborate with local schools and citywide agencies to address and prevent gun violence and support those affected by it within our community and beyond.

Seventh and 8th graders also attended a demonstration and discussion at the Prep by Raw Tools, an anti-violence advocacy organization that disassembles guns and repurposes them into life-giving implements, such as tools for gardening and artwork. Our thanks to Shane Claiborne for sharing his organization's story and mission to promote peace and community building.





Left to right (back row): Anthony Luker, Education and Outreach Specialist, PA Office of Attorney General; Bilal Qayyum, Founder, Father's Day Rally Committee; Hon. Malcolm Kenyatta, PA State Representative; Rev. Francis Hannafey, S.J., Pastor, Old. St. Joseph's Church

(Front row): F. Christopher Goins, President, Girard College; Rev. Steve Surovick, S.J., Sr. Director, Mission & Ministry, St. Joseph's Preparatory School; Bryan Carter, President and CEO, Gesu School



Gesu President and CEO Bryan Carter (at podium) addresses the media at a press conference on gun violence prevention, along with education, legislative, religious, and community partners.

November | 25th Symposium



Gesu's **25th Symposium on Transforming Education** discussed how to support educators during challenging times. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, expectations in schools continued to rise, though budgets, staffing, and facilities did not. Amidst the conditions of a lethal pandemic, a racial reckoning, and a toxic political controversy about schools, teachers and leaders faced unprecedented pressures. As such, educators questioned how to respond constructively to maintain their care, energy, and competence.

Keynote Speaker Rob Evans, Ed.D., Educator, Psychologist, and School Consultant, shared insights on this topic, outlining practical ways to reduce stress and restore hope both individually and as a community. We are grateful to **Michael Gary, Ed.M.,** independent school leader, for moderating an engaging Q&A session and to alumna **Catera Scott '02, M.Ed.** for sharing her perspectives as an educator and administrator. Learn more about Gesu symposia on our website.

Thank you to Presenting Sponsors James & Agnes Kim Foundation and Maguire Foundation, Salutatorian Sponsor Milton Hershey School, and to all of our sponsors.

Visit gesuschool.org and our social media channels for videos and more photos. Read "Gesu News" on the homepage. Or, visit the "About" page for our media archive.

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December



The United States Naval Academy Office of Admissions and the Naval Academy Minority Association visited Gesu to **promote STEM learning** through our ongoing partnership. Gesu 7th graders learned how to program Wonder Workshop's robots to move with tablets. Students raced their robots to test their control of the machines. As they explored fundamentals of coding, students also practiced life skills, such as teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. Read media coverage from *Technical.ly Philly* on the Gesu website. Click "Gesu in the News."



Our Gesu community gathered for a **Kwanzaa service** to reflect on the seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. The service included a libation ritual and lighting of the kinara.

January



To help celebrate the 2023 MLK Day of Service, Gesu School **welcomed back to North Philadelphia U.S. Senator Bob Casey, former Gesu 5th Grade Teacher and Basketball Coach!** Thanks to the Senator for visiting our volunteers from Gesu, St. Joseph's Prep, Saint Joseph's University, Interfaith Philadelphia, and other organizations, and for supporting their efforts to serve our community through a block clean-up, making sandwiches and packaging hygiene kits for homeless shelters, and preparing wellness kits for the HEADstrong Foundation.



To celebrate our community during **Catholic Schools Week, Gesu students collected canned goods and donated all contributions to the Mother of Mercy House food pantry in Kensington.** Congratulations to Ms. Asta's Kindergarten, Mr. Coder's 3rd Grade, and Ms. Young's 7th Grade for collecting the most cans. Thank you to the student council for spearheading the service project. Students filled an entire van with their donations!

February



Gesu hosted a dialogue with our colleagues at St. Joseph's Prep and Saint Joseph's University to discuss the **topic of Jesuit slaveholding and the work of reconciliation with descendants of the enslaved. Rev. Timothy Kesicki, S.J., Chair of the Descendants Truth and Reconciliation Trust,** presented Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation. The presentation addressed the work of the Jesuits to promote accountability, education, and reparations, as well as efforts towards forgiveness and action.



The **Gesu School Gospel Choir** joined the **St. Joseph's Prep Concert Band** to perform the **Eagles fight song** and cheer on the Philadelphia Eagles for **Super Bowl LVII.**

March

Gesu School celebrated **Read for Respect Day** with our friends at the Anti-Defamation League Philadelphia. Volunteers read to students in Kindergarten through 4th grade, discussing messages of inclusion, kindness, and grit. Readers shared stories including *Stacey's Extraordinary Words* by Stacey Abrams, *Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos* by Monica Brown, and *Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman* by Kathleen Krull. Students created a mural art project highlighting their uniqueness and resilience. Thank you to the ADL for volunteering their time to build community with Gesu!

Gesu held a **police appreciation breakfast** to honor our local law enforcement and share gratitude for their service to our community. We recognized Officer Reed for his five-year partnership with Gesu through the G.R.E.A.T violence prevention program and for being a valued member of our Gesu team!



March | One Day Challenge

More than **960 friends** nationwide contributed to Gesu's 2023 One Day Challenge! Gesu met all challenge goals and **raised a record-setting $123,337.84!** Students donated **$1,566.68 in "change for change." Special thanks to matching gift donors: The Z Foundation, K10 Kids Foundation, Mario & Charlotte Ferroni, Tim & Ellen Foster, Mary Kate Leonard, and two anonymous donors.**

May | 2023 Gala

Thank you to all who supported the 2023 Gesu Gala! We're grateful for your generosity and the opportunity to celebrate our community.

Congratulations to 2023 Gesu Spirit Medalists, **the Detwiler family and Peter & Kathy Linneman** for their dedication to Gesu School. The gala also honored **Nyree Lyons '95 as recipient of The James F. Higgins '45 Distinguished Alumni Award** for her commitment to serving our community.

The evening featured an inspiring speech from Gesu alumna, **Jada Smith '13.** Gesu thanks radio personality **Patty Jackson of 105.3 WDAS Philadelphia** for hosting the gala and the Urban Guerilla Orchestra and the Gesu Gospel Choir for the gifts of their music.

Gesu is grateful to all 2023 gala sponsors, especially **Presenting Sponsors, Peter & Kathy Linneman and The Maguire Foundation.**





Photos by Sabina Louise Pierce

June



Photo by David DeBalko



Photo courtesy of Saint Joseph's University

2023 Graduation

Congratulations to the Gesu School Class of 2023! We are proud of each of these confident, compassionate, and talented students. They give us hope for the future! Special thanks to our **two commencement speakers, U.S. Senator Bob Casey,** who shared a special video address for Gesu families on the 40th anniversary of his teaching and coaching at Gesu School through Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and **Ric Harris, President and General Manager of NBC 10 (WCAU), Telemundo62 (WWSI), and NBC Sports Philadelphia.**

Gesu President and CEO Bryan Carter served as commencement speaker for the Saint Joseph's University 2023 graduate student ceremony. He received an **honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree,** bestowed to those who have made significant contributions to society.

Knetzger Teacher of the Year 2023: Jo-Anne Young

Congratulations to the 2023 Gesu Teacher of the Year, 7th Grade Girls Teacher and Science Teacher Jo-Anne Young! Ms. Young has exhibited extraordinary commitment to her students and to her craft, teaching at Gesu for 27 years. She holds a B.S. in Science from Morgan State University and an M.Ed. in Science Education and Administration from Neumann College. With her background in science, she restructured the 7th grade curriculum during the pandemic and continually applies technology to make learning more interactive.

A true woman for others, Ms. Young has worked with students to create care packages for Teacher Appreciation Day and has spearheaded multiple Earth Day rooftop clean-up projects. We thank Ms. Young for sharing her optimism, her contributions to unite our Gesu community, and her unwavering support for our Gesu students and their education!

Endowed by a gift from Jay and Kathy Sherrerd in memory of Gesu Trustee Edwin Knetzger, The Knetzger Outstanding Teacher Award is presented annually to that faculty member demonstrating the highest quality of teaching ability and commitment. Teachers nominate their peers for this honor.





"Ms. Young's personality and character traits are what make her special. Ms. Young has taught me to stay motivated by leading by example. Ms. Young absolutely loves to win. I think that's one of her best qualities. She refuses never to try her best. Ms. Young will do just about anything to keep thriving. I think that's a respectable trait. I think everyone should be as motivated and determined as Ms. Young.

She knows how to keep a balance with her students. She's funny and serious. She's kind, but we know our limits and boundaries. I know Ms. Young will always look out for me as well as all other students."

—Ariel '24

"Jo-Anne's work is making a real difference in the lives of her students, especially young girls. She is inspiring them to pursue their dreams and to believe in themselves. She is also helping to close the gender gap in STEM fields. She has organized a 'Girls in Science' day for 7th graders to participate in hands-on activities at the U.S. Naval Academy. She works with the Science, Nature, and Art in Philadelphia program at the Wagner Free Institute of Science.

She is a strong advocate for students and works hard to ensure that they have the resources and support they need to succeed. She is a dedicated and innovative educator. In addition, she is a valuable member of the school community and is always willing to help colleagues."

—Pat Leaf, Science Coordinator and **Annette Pickett,** 8th Grade Girls Teacher

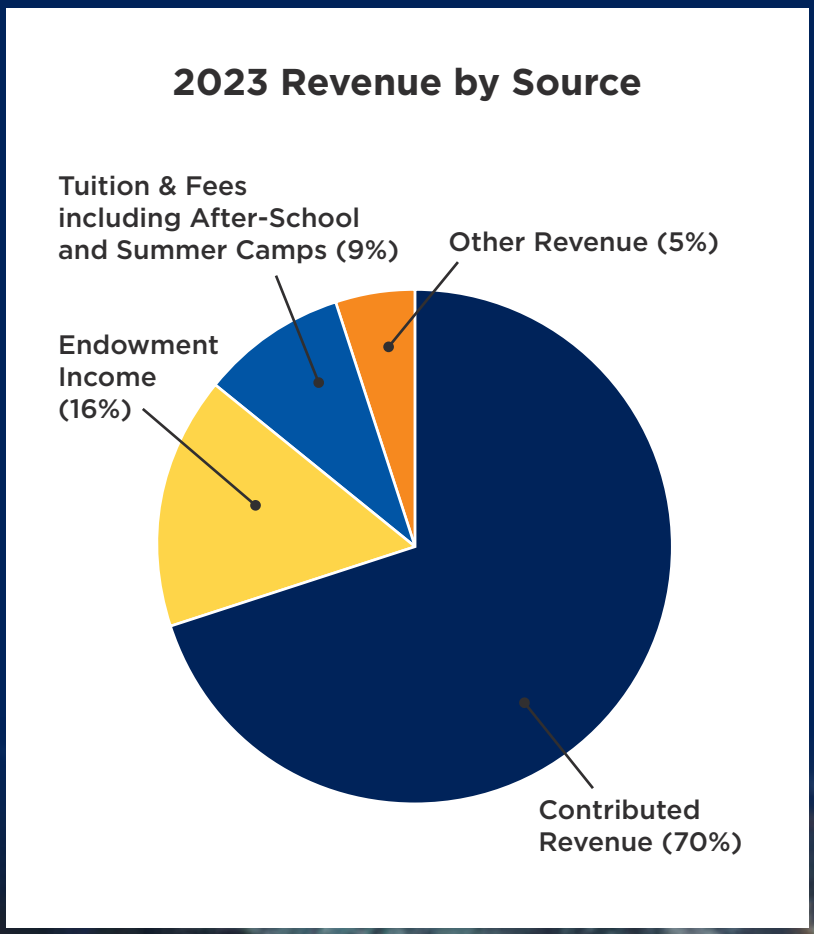
Financials & Fast Facts

Financials & Numbers

A Gesu education transforms lives. Gesu graduates are confident, compassionate leaders. Gesu instills values of civic engagement, community service, self-respect, and care for others.

At Gesu School, we fundraise 85% of our operating budget annually to provide the highest quality education for Pre-K–8th graders. Our Gesu families are unable to afford the full tuition cost for educating each student. Our fundraising helps to offset tuition costs and makes a Gesu education affordable. Gesu offers generous financial aid to all families who qualify based on income.

A gift to our annual fund or Sponsor a Child program helps to directly support Gesu financial aid. Gesu School strives to steward your gifts wisely to have the greatest impact for our students. We invite you to review our audited financial statements at gesuschool.org.



$3,046,289
total in financial aid to 420 students raised in FY23

$16,318
cost to educate a child in FY23

$43,000
average household income of a Gesu School family of four

54%
percentage of Gesu families with an annual household income of less than $35,000

100%
Gesu School qualifies 100% for free/reduced breakfast and lunch programs.



Gesu student council members collect canned goods to support a local food pantry.

Our Gesu Values

Educating the Whole Child

Educating the whole child in academic excellence, character formation, faith, and leadership to develop "young women and men for others"

Soft Skills Curriculum

A soft skills curriculum tailored to Gesu students to build motivation, awareness, grit, independence, and social competence

Instruction for All Abilities

The conviction that every child can learn, illustrated by the availability of both remedial and advanced instruction in math and English language arts

Family & Student Support

Personal attention for students and support for families, including a full-time social worker and counseling team

Graduate Support Program

Preparation for successful high school enrollment, leading to lifelong education, productive careers, and leadership roles in society

DEI & Cultural Experiences

Emphasis on diversity-related educational and cultural experiences to broaden horizons and provide soft skills for success

Service

A commitment to strive to do and be "greater" for the service of God

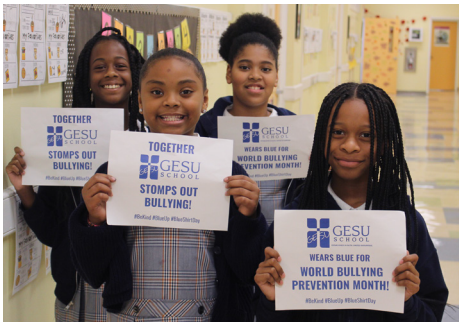


Portrait of a Gesu Graduate

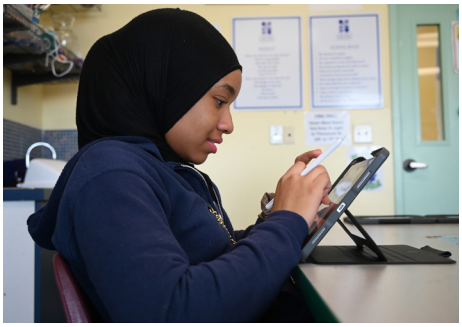
As a Catholic school in the traditions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Jesuits, Gesu believes in educating the whole person in mind, body, and spirit. Gesu teaches students to develop these "Grad at Grad" characteristics, which Jesuit schools integrate into their educational philosophy. Gesu school graduates are:

- Open to Growth
- Intellectually Competent
- Religious and Dedicated to Service
- Committed to Doing Justice
- Young Men and Women for Others

Learn more at "Portrait of a Graduate" on gesuschool.org.



Gesu actively teaches soft skills and character building in classrooms and via school-wide efforts, such as recognizing National Bullying Prevention Month.



Gesu invests in one-to-one technology for our students to develop critical thinking and prepare them for top high schools and careers.



Thank You to our Fiscal Year 2023 Donors!*

Your support brings quality education to North Philadelphia.

Pierre Toussaint Society | $50,000 and above

Gesu School recognizes our leadership-level donors who have made annual gifts of $50,000 and above with membership in the Pierre Toussaint Society. Venerable Pierre Toussaint, the society's namesake, is a hero from our Catholic heritage. Born into slavery in Haiti in the early 19th century, Pierre Toussaint was brought to New York City, where he became a successful hairdresser. He used his earnings to free many slaves and finally himself. Once a free man, he performed many acts of charity, including the establishment of an orphanage and a school for Black children. When most fled the city during a yellow fever epidemic, he stayed to nurse the sick. His dedication to the well-being and education of the poor makes Pierre Toussaint a fitting patron for Gesu and our donors.

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Members of the Magis Society impact children's lives by including Gesu School in their estate plans. For more information about how you can help secure Gesu's future through your estate plans, or to notify us of inclusion in your will, please contact Rob Weinstein, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, at 215-763-9077 or rob.weinstein@gesuschool.org.

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"I've realized that it's always good to step out of your comfort zone and try new things. I have gained everlasting friendships at Gesu. I am looking forward to being successful in my talents, being able to go to college and share my talents with the world." **—A'Jani '24**

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"Gesu has prepared me for the future through my extraordinary teachers, particularly Mrs. Pickett and Ms. Williamson. Everyone at Gesu shows me I can be a better person daily. I am excited to continue to grow my talents in art." **—Brooke '24**

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"Gesu has prepared me to be a strong student. I've learned a lot in both school and life. Gesu taught me to be responsible, have good time management, and be aware of my surroundings." **—Sabour '24**

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(See tribute on page 39.)

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"Gesu has prepared me for the future not only by helping me as a student, but also by helping me realize my potential and growth as a person. I've met many interesting people from different backgrounds at Gesu, and it's great to learn from them. I'm most looking forward to graduating high school and college. College will be a whole new experience, and I look forward to becoming a full member of society. I want to learn my passions in life." **—Azarael '24**

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“Gesu has prepared me to work hard, and the school has motivated me. I feel supported at Gesu. In the future, I’m looking forward to seeing who I become. I know I have potential, and I think I’ll get closer to figuring that out as I get older.” **—Madisyn ’24**



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"Gesu is special to me because it's a genuine community. They care for all of the students. Everybody is welcome here and accepted here. It helps build character and discipline. You get taught very important lessons here. When you come here, you're learning about your faith, and you're learning about not just books, but what you really can do with your life and who you really are." **—Amir '24**

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"Gesu has prepared me for the future since Kindergarten. They've shown me love, support, and a great community to grow my education. With great teachers and staff, I have learned valuable lessons I plan to take with me as I move forward. I look forward to working in a STEM job in the future. I would love to work in something space-related, but I am open to everything!" **—Mya '24**

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Our Gesu community dedicates this impact report

In Memory of Mark Solomon



Mark was integral to saving Gesu School from closing in 1993. Thanks to Mark, Gesu is thriving, and countless students have received a transformative education. Mark was a true champion for Gesu students and has made a lasting impact through his tireless work and advocacy as a Trustee, Sponsor a Child supporter, advisor, mentor, and friend to Gesu and to children around the globe. We are deeply grateful for his dedication and generosity for more than 30 years. And we offer our deepest condolences to his family.

May his memory be a blessing.







The Mark Solomon Gesu Spirit Medal

Gesu School is honored to announce that our highest honor, the Gesu Spirit Medal, has been re-named in memory of Mark Solomon, who passed away on September 30, 2023. Mark, the very first Gesu Spirit Medalist in 2006, played a vital role 30 years ago in helping to keep Gesu open and transitioning the school into an independent Catholic school. His kindness, generosity, and love for Gesu's children were boundless. Mark proudly embodied the Jewish concept of Tikkun Olam, a commitment to actions that help to make a better world. His legacy of philanthropy and advocacy for those in need can be felt around the world, from Philadelphia to Israel, and beyond.

The "Mark Solomon Gesu Spirit Medal" will continue to honor individuals and organizations who have shown extraordinary commitment to Gesu School through their loyal advocacy and actions, and who have made a significant contribution to Gesu's success as a model urban elementary school.



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Mission Statement

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.

Your prayers, time, and financial generosity provide limitless possibilities for 400 students and enable Gesu to live our mission.

Thank You