

SPRING 2025

communiqué



Gavin Kaysen '98

Making a Difference Through Food



Mission Statement

The mission of Academy of Holy Angels is to educate and nurture a diverse student population so that each student, as a whole person, may achieve full potential to excel intellectually, to live spiritually, to lead responsibly, to act justly, and to serve selflessly.

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On the cover: Gavin Kaysen, AHA class of 1998, is a world class chef who continues to make a difference in the Twin Cities community and beyond. *Photo credit:* Erin Kincheloe.

On the back cover: The AHA Class of 1966 celebrated their reunion.



Dear Academy of Holy Angels Community,

As the seasons change and we embrace the renewal of spring, we also take a moment to reflect on a year of growth, success, and celebration at Academy of Holy Angels. This has been a remarkable year for our community, marked by achievements that highlight our commitment to excellence in academics, athletics, leadership, and faith.

This year has been especially meaningful to me as it marks my first as President of AHA. I have been truly inspired by our students, faculty, and families. The energy, dedication, and faith-driven spirit of this community are evident in everything we do. From the classroom to the athletic fields, from service projects to the performing arts, the students of Holy Angels continue to demonstrate what it truly means to be Stars - shining brightly and leading with purpose.

We are especially proud to celebrate our principal, Heidi Foley, who has been honored as the recipient of the 2025 Minndependent Leadership Award. This award recognizes outstanding school leaders across Minnesota who inspire passion and purpose, drive innovation, exemplify integrity, and advocate for private and independent education. Ms. Foley's leadership has been instrumental in shaping the positive and forward-thinking environment at AHA, and we are thrilled to see her recognized for her exceptional contributions to our school and the broader educational community.

There is a renewed energy and interest in AHA among prospective students and families. We have seen an increase in applications and commitments for the Class of 2029 and transfer students. More families are recognizing the exceptional opportunities available at Holy Angels - an education that balances rigorous academics, faith-based values, and a supportive community. It is a testament to the strength of our mission and the impact of our school's work.

As we look to the future, we remain steadfast in our commitment to building upon the strong foundations of excellence that define AHA. The spring sports season promises exciting competition, while the spring musical, *Once Upon a Mattress*, will showcase the theatrical talents of our students and delight audiences. On May 3, we will come together as a community at Starfest; we hope you'll consider returning to campus for this important, fun, and meaningful fundraiser. As we approach graduation on June 1, we eagerly anticipate the moment our outstanding seniors walk through the front doors - roses in hand, surrounded by loved ones - ready to excel intellectually, live spiritually, lead responsibly, act justly, and serve selflessly.

This year has been one of growth and celebration, and we are excited to continue our journey, embracing new opportunities while staying true to our mission. Thank you to our alumni, parents, and generous donors for your continued support and belief in Academy of Holy Angels. Your partnership makes it possible for us to nurture and inspire the next generation of leaders, scholars, and faithful individuals.



With heartfelt gratitude,

David Sorkin, Ed.D.
President



Photo credit: Bonjwing Lee

Gavin Kaysen '98

Making a Difference Through Food

Gavin Kaysen discovered his passion for cooking at a young age. He credits his grandmother for guiding him and recognizing his talents in the kitchen. Gavin was inspired to become a chef while working at his part-time job as an AHA student at the Bloomington Subway in the 90s. However, like most of his classmates, Gavin chose a traditional college after graduation.

Gregg Sawyer, AHA's theater director, recalls the phone call he received from Gavin, three weeks into college. Gavin told Gregg, "I don't know what I am doing here." When he asked Gavin what he would rather be doing, Gavin said, without hesitation, "I want to cook." Gregg suggested that he consider a culinary school, to which Gavin replied, "That's what Nance told me." (Nance is what he called his mother, Nancy). Gregg said, "Listen to your mom. She is a smart lady. Find a school that meets your needs, and go there." The next time Gregg heard from Gavin, he had been accepted and was registered in the New England Culinary Institute in Vermont.

Gavin's chef training at the New England Culinary Institute was the right move, and, not long after, he landed an internship in Auberge de Lavaux in Switzerland. There, Gavin learned the discipline of fine dining and had the opportunity to work with some of the top chefs in the

world, including Robert Curry at Domaine Chandon in California and Marco Pierre White in London.

However, perhaps his most important mentorship came under legendary chef Daniel Boulud in New York City, where Kaysen became Executive Chef at Café Boulud. Under Boulud's guidance, Kaysen refined his skills and gained national recognition, even competing in the Bocuse d'Or, the "Olympics of Cooking", in 2007. Gavin shared, "Everyday since I joined Daniel's team, he demonstrated how life-changing it is to have a mentor like him by my side. I now know that both having a mentor and being a mentor should be a two-way street. *The Synergy Series*, my second self-published book releasing at the end of April, captures this spirit of reciprocal mentorship with some of the best chefs in the country and the world. It's inspired by The Synergy Series of collaborative dinners we've hosted at Spoon and Stable over the past ten years. Each time we've hosted The Synergy Series dinners, I've selected a charity to receive a portion of the proceeds. We've proudly raised over \$300,000 for a variety of local and national charitable causes. Now with this book, we'll be donating the proceeds to Ment'or, a nonprofit devoted to inspiring culinary excellence in young professionals."

In 2014, Gavin, to the delight of many in Minnesota—including his friends from Holy Angels—made the decision to return home. Once back in Minnesota, Gavin founded Soigné Hospitality Group, bringing all that he had learned to the Twin Cities. That same year, Kaysen opened his first restaurant, Spoon and Stable, in the North Loop. To this day, Spoon and Stable is one of the most successful and critically acclaimed restaurants in the Twin Cities and the country. It was a semi-finalist in the James Beard Awards for “Outstanding Restaurant.”

Since then, Gavin has continued to build on his success. In addition to Spoon and Stable, he has opened, owned, and operated several local restaurants, each with its own personality. They include Demi, where Kaysen showcases his most refined and creative tasting menus, and Bellecour, originally a full-service French bistro that evolved into a beloved bakery. He also opened Mara, located at Four Seasons Hotel Minneapolis, which is inspired by Kaysen’s travels and serves Mediterranean cuisine. Gavin also opened Socca Café in 2022 to offer a more casual daytime gathering place for a relaxed meal or quick bite.

Kaysen’s impact extends beyond his restaurants. He is deeply committed to mentorship, education, and community support. For example, Gavin is President of Team USA for the Bocuse d’Or, where he mentors and supports the next generation of competitive chefs. In addition, Gavin founded the Heart of the House Foundation, in 2020 to support the Soigné Hospitality team and their families through financial aid and wellness programs.

Gavin serves on the board of Fastbreak Foundation which supports education, inclusion, and wellness initiatives through the charity arm of Minnesota’s professional basketball teams. He shared, “I am involved with many organizations, but the ones that take priority for me are Heart of the House, VEAP, Second Harvest Heartland, and the Fastbreak Foundation. The reason I give back in an impactful way is because we have the platform, and I truly believe it is our calling to do so. Food is a neutralizer when it comes to bringing people together and serving others; it fills my soul bucket to make a difference.”

Since graduating from AHA in 1998, Gavin has established himself as one of the top chefs in the world. He has earned two James Beard Awards - Rising Star Chef of the Year in 2008, Best Chef: Midwest in 2018 and was a James Beard Award “Outstanding Chef” in

2020. Even with all his acclaim, he continues to support his alma mater in a variety of ways. He has served as a career speaker (pictured) and regularly donates desserts and meals for the school’s special events and fundraisers.

“Holy Angels was an important part of my life and has continued to impact on how I move around this world,” he reflected. “The connections, friends, and experiences I had while being at that school helped open my eyes to the world of food. I took home economics while at school, and at the time, I was the only male in that class; I took it because I knew what I wanted to do for the rest of my life - serve and feed others. The teachers there are some of the best people I know, and I still stay in touch with many. Gregg Sawyer is a regular at my restaurants, so we catch up often, and it is always such a pleasure to see him and talk about the days of when I was there.”

From a young boy cooking in his grandmother’s kitchen and in the 27 years since his AHA graduation, Gavin Kaysen has established himself as an esteemed and generous leader in the culinary world. Through his food, mentorship, and philanthropy, he continues to shape the future of dining.



Gavin and Larry Fitzgerald meet at a fundraising event for VEAP.



Gavin served as an alumni career speaker in 2018.

Happy 100th Birthday!



Happy birthday to AHA alumna **Mary Ann Horan Jeffrey '42** who turned 100 years old in December! Mary Ann started school at Annunciation in 1930, the year before AHA was built in Richfield. She grew up so close to the Boulevard Theater on 53rd and Lyndale in Minneapolis that she remembers falling asleep at night to the sounds of Shirley Temple and Judy Garland

movies. She recalls that AHA was a hard school academically but she loved the experience. One of Mary Ann's favorite memories is dancing with her friends in the lunchroom. To this day, Mary Ann is grateful for her AHA education.

While most of her classmates have passed away, Mary Ann says she still enjoys receiving and reading the *Communiqué*.



Alumni Class Notes



College Planning Day: We are grateful to many alums who returned to assist with College Planning Day! They did a wonderful job providing professional advice to our junior class during the career preparation session.

Janice Forde Victorino '68 and **Kelsey Forde '00** recently knocked one off the 'bucket list' and attended the 150th running of the Kentucky Derby. Janice is happily retired in Arizona, and Kelsey is a successful New Mexico-based business owner.



Members of the **Class of 1971** gather for lunch a few times a year since their 40th reunion in 2011.



Congratulations to **John Dornik '80** who was named a Minnesota ICON by Finance and Commerce and Minnesota Lawyer magazines.



Members of the **Class of 1986** met for some ice fishing and cards. They are **Frank Amore, Bill Geddes, Tim Smith, John Arms, Dave Huss, John Podgorak,** and **Dean Bjorkstrand.**



The **Class of 1994** gathered in September. They were grateful for those who came from near and far to celebrate. They hope to see even more Co-Stars at the next reunion!



Two AHA alum superstars! **Jess Allured '97**, AHA choral director, and **Noah Quam '14**, Brooklyn Park High school choral director, met recently at the Tri-Metro Honors Choir Festival.

Tyler Howell '02, who was inducted into the AHA Activities Hall of Fame, dropped the ceremonial puck at the AHA vs. Blake game on January 31.



Congratulations to Chris Lamprecht '05 – nominated for 2025 MN Teacher of the Year

After his AHA graduation, Chris attended the University of Minnesota for both his undergraduate and master's degree programs. He started his teaching career at Beacon Preparatory School/Seven Hills in 2010 and has been teaching science there ever since.

"I love making an impact on the life of my students. My objective is to always provide real opportunities to experience learning. I believe that educators should be given the time and encouragement to demonstrate their mastery. Sometimes we are so obsessed with getting through a set amount of curriculum that we do not make it matter enough to the students."

According to Chris, two teachers at AHA made a monumental impact on his life. "First, Dan Dimond. Not only did he teach me most of what I know about building things and creative expression, but more importantly, he taught me to bring joy into everything that I do. To this day, I use many of Dan's fun phrases and teachable moments during my own teaching. On the same day that he passed away, I was helping my school's theater department build their set for an upcoming performance. I was sharing fun stories with my students about how Dan would make Saturday morning build days so much fun.

The other teacher that inspired me to become a teacher is Barb Klish. I had always been into cooking, so her courses were a playground for me to explore. Before I was halfway through my junior year, I had already taken all of the Family and Consumer Science classes that Barb had to offer. About that time, Barb asked me if I would be interested in helping her to teach a class to the 5th graders at Blessed Trinity. We talked over the concepts we wanted to teach, and we prepared our lesson plans. Little did I know at the time, but this was the start of my teaching career! Barb's classroom was my home at AHA.



Nick Anderson '13 returned to campus on January 9 to present at all-school Convocation. Nick shared parts of his life story and provided inspiring advice about overcoming obstacles, having selfless perspectives, and giving people opportunities to shine.



Stars girls basketball legend **Laura Bagwell-Katalinich '16** was on staff for the first half of the AHA winter season. It was great having her energy, knowledge, and passion back in the Holy Angels gym!



Former Stars hockey players **Tommy Burke** (Bowling Green), **Mikey Reilly** (current NY Islander), and **Connor Reilly** (U of M) returned to spend time with the Stars hockey team after a game. Once a Star, always a Star!



Congratulations to **Olivia Keller '22** who broke the University of St. Thomas (UST) women's 800-meter run record. Keller, running her first career 800m race as an individual event, broke the previous Tommie record by nearly three seconds.



Marina Amigon '24 plays in the bass section for the University of Notre Dame band. She played throughout the game during the National Championship football game in Atlanta.



Emma Powers '21 **Awarded the Gates Cambridge Scholarship**

Congratulations to Emma Powers, a biochemistry major at the University of Notre Dame, who has been awarded the Gates Cambridge Scholarship! This prestigious scholarship provides funding to complete a postgraduate degree at the University of Cambridge. It is a highly selective scholarship and designed to identify future global leaders committed to improving the lives of others.

During her undergraduate studies, Emma interned with leading research institutes, where she focused on innovative cancer research techniques. At Cambridge, she plans to deepen her understanding and explore new pathways in cancer therapy, pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree in oncology, and building on her solid foundation in oncology research. Emma has completed internships with the Mayo Clinic and Pfizer to expand her knowledge of the broader field of cancer treatment.

"I am extremely grateful for the coaches, teachers, advisors, and friends at Holy Angels who pushed me to pursue sciences which gave me a strong foundation when I entered college. I felt extremely well-equipped to succeed at Notre Dame. Teachers like Mrs. Poshusta pushed me to realize future opportunities in STEM, and teachers like Mrs. Ahlm taught me to be well-rounded and strong in all areas of academics, including my writing."

Emma is the daughter of AHA alumni John '86 and Carol Banovetz Powers '92.

Original content published by Rebecca Hicks at chemistry.nd.edu on February 25, 2025.

The Smiths

An AHA Family Through & Through

In the fall of 1964, Ray and Gail Smith made the decision to send their oldest daughter Linda to Academy of Holy Angels (AHA). Over the next 27 years, the Smiths sent nine of their eleven children to AHA. It was a unique time in AHA's history, as it faced enrollment challenges, the decision to go co-ed, and the start of the school's athletic program. The Smiths rose up to meet the needs of the time by volunteering in nearly every capacity imaginable. They played a role in launching both the annual gala (now Starfest) and the President's Star Council giving society. They were involved until their last child graduated from AHA in 1992.

For 24 years, there were no members of the Smith family in attendance at AHA. However, the next generation of Smiths arrived in the fall of 2016 when the oldest son of Tim Smith '86 became a Star. Tim '86 and his wife Shannon's children - Griffin '20, Aidan '22, Madden '23 and Ella '25 - all have made a remarkable impact. In fact, all are state champions in their respective sport! Griffin was a member of the 2017 State Champion football team, Aidan was a state champion in soccer in 2019, and Madden and Ella were both state champions on the 2022 soccer team. Ray and Gail's youngest son, Jaime '92, has a son Ben who is currently a sophomore at Holy Angels.

Holy Angels is so grateful for the many multi-generational families who make

sacrifices in order to send their children to AHA and who meet the needs of the times.

A Reflection from Linda Smith Collins '68 (oldest daughter of Ray and Gail Smith)

Sending my siblings and me to Holy Angels was a tremendous sacrifice for my parents, but they both believed that Holy Angels would help their children grow spiritually and academically, instilling values that would shape us in our lives.

For me, starting at Holy Angels was initially intimidating. Coming from St. Richard's, a much smaller, single-floor school, the grandeur and scale of Holy Angels felt overwhelming. Yet, I quickly grew to love the building and the community. The teachers were incredibly supportive, encouraging each student to live up to her full potential. There was a shared belief that anything was possible, and that confidence has stayed with me.

I fondly remember working a student service job to help offset the cost of tuition, which made me appreciate the value of my education even more. That experience is one reason why I continue to support scholarships at Holy Angels today.

The friendships I made at Holy Angels remain precious to me. There was a unique bond among all of us young women,

strengthened by our shared experiences and values. It's been wonderful to watch my siblings, nieces, and nephews also attend Holy Angels, knowing it continues to be a place where students are challenged, supported, and inspired.

A Reflection from Tim Smith '86 (son of Ray and Gail Smith)

I have been blessed to have had Holy Angels in my life since I was a child. Some of my favorite memories growing up include visiting AHA as a five year old with my sister Sheila '73 and attending countless games, plays, and musicals on campus. I had an opportunity to attend Holy Angels, and some of my best friends today are from the class of 1986.

These past nine years that our kids have been at AHA have gone by so quickly. Not only has it provided an incredible education for them, but their friendships will also last a lifetime. While Holy Angels is a financial sacrifice for many of us, the Christian education and opportunities it provides have been so worth it to our family. We look forward to being part of the Holy Angels community for many years to come!



The Smith Family 2020



Gail Smith, Sr. Mary Walter and friends



Smith Family



Ray and Gail Smith, St. Joseph Award

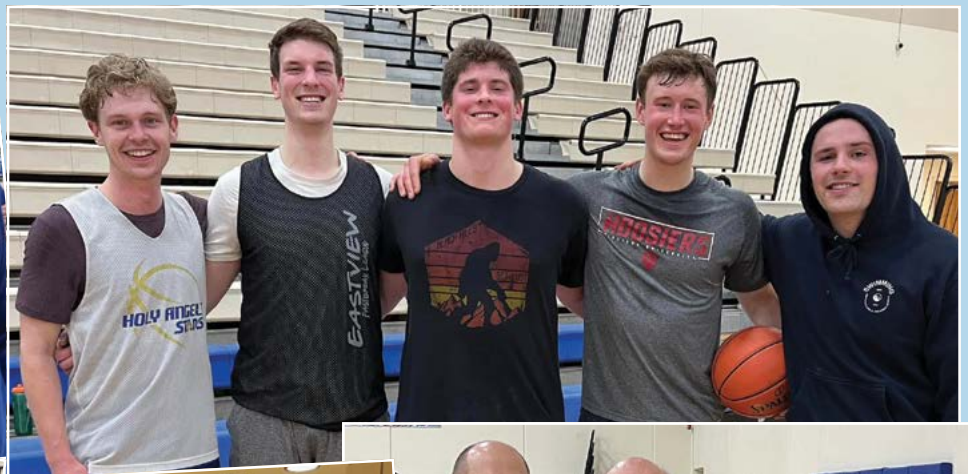
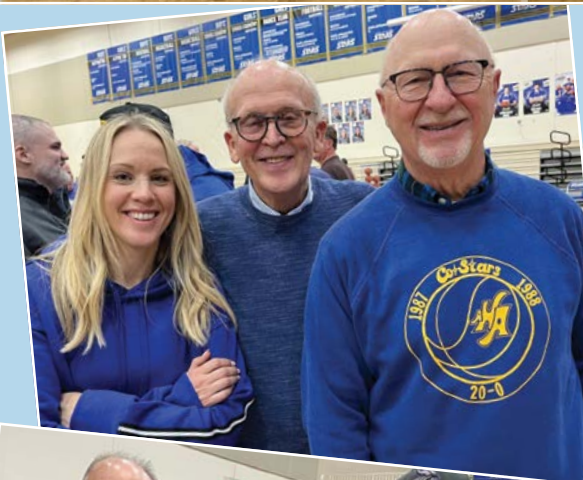


Linda Smith and parents, graduation '68



Alumni celebrate the newly named Gary Rufsvold Court!

What a night! Thank you to all AHA alumni as well as current and former faculty and staff who came out to Alumni Basketball Night to help celebrate the naming of Gary Rufsvold Court! It was a great opportunity to celebrate Coach Rufsvold for all that he has done for AHA these past 50+ years. There was also a great turnout at Alumni Hoops in December!



ROCK THE LAWN-JUNE 13

Rock the Lawn is an all-community outdoor music concert celebrating Holy Angels! It includes music, food, drink and great fellowship. We hope you can join us!



Headliner- The Good, The Bad and The Funky

The Good, The Bad and The Funky is one of the midwest's premier soul-funk bands. They put together world-class vocals, a blazing five-piece horn section, the most soulful rhythm section north of Memphis, and a fresh take on old and new classics. They blend songs from artists such as Stevie Wonder, James Brown, Michael Jackson, Hall and Oates, and Bruno Mars.

The opening band is **Twin Star Rocket**. They play the best songs from rock's biggest artists delivered in rapid-fire!



TICKETS

For tickets go to: <https://rockthelawn25.givesmart.com>

Or text: **rockthelawn25** to **76278**

SCHEDULE

6:00 pm	Doors open! Food trucks, bar, and games on the front lawn
7:30 pm	Opening Band: Twin Star Rocket
9:30 pm	The Good, the Bad and the Funky

Rock the Lawn will be offered in 2025 and again in 2027.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Stone Arch Law Office is sponsoring the concert stage!



Supporting AHA Rock the Lawn in 2025
Wills, Trusts, Estates, and Charitable Gifting



A Celebration of Generations at the 2025 AHA Awards Reception



On Tuesday, January 28, over 150 guests had the special opportunity to celebrate the contributions of many AHA community members at the 2025 AHA Awards Reception. The event took place at Minnesota Valley Country Club.

The annual reception formally honors several community members for their generosity, service, volunteer efforts, and leadership. Members of the St. Joseph Court and the AHA Legacy Society are recognized for their lifetime philanthropic support of the school. Finally, the newest members to the Academy of Holy Angels Activities Hall of Fame are inducted.

This year's honorees included individuals from many different eras, and, as such, the event brought together a wide variety of guests from all generations of AHA! It was wonderful to welcome pre-co-ed Angies, Co-Stars, and Stars as well. Congratulations to the following individuals for their remarkable accomplishments and lasting impact on the Academy of Holy Angels community and beyond!



Mary Tanghe receives her award from Dr. Sorkin

**DR. MARY
FALENCZYKOWSKI
TANGHE '62**

Angelus Award

In honor of her remarkable career as a medical doctor, her selfless service to military families and the physically challenged, and for her generosity to AHA students through her endowed scholarship program.



Jerry and Karen Morris and their family

JERRY & KAREN MORRIS
St. Joseph Award

In honor of more than 20 years of steadfast service to Academy of Holy Angels as board members, community leaders, campaign chairs, team parents, generous donors, and active volunteers.

**JIM BURKE '85 & DEB
ROCHFORD BURKE '86**

Possumus Award

In honor of their support of AHA as parents and alums and most notably for the key role they played in the initial development and growth of Rock the Lawn (serving as chairs for two years).

SHANNON MAYER

Possumus Award

In honor of her remarkable volunteer leadership at Academy of Holy Angels, including serving as Chair of the AHA Board of Trustees, AHA Parent Association President, and Booster Club committee member.

**MARIA MELCHER DAVY '05
& JOHNNY DAVY '05**

Rising Star Award

In honor of their collective professional achievements in both corporate and start-up settings, their dedicated service to organizations such as the Church of St. Patrick and Catholic Charities, and their steadfast support of Academy of Holy Angels.

AMY SPRINGER GENTLE '87

*AHA Activities
Hall of Fame Inductee*

In recognition of her excellent high school soccer, basketball, and softball careers in Academy of Holy Angels and her collegiate success in basketball and softball at the College of St. Thomas.

TYLER HOWELLS '02

*AHA Activities
Hall of Fame Inductee*

In honor of his highly successful high school athletic career, which included earning All-State recognition in hockey and soccer, nine athletic letters, and MVP honors on the 2002 State Championship hockey team, as well as his collegiate and professional hockey successes.



Gregg Sawyer and Jason Underferth

JASON UNDERFERTH '96

*AHA Activities
Hall of Fame Inductee*

In recognition of his remarkable career in AHA theater, where he was highly skilled at constructing sets, lighting, and sound design. In addition, for his professional accomplishments and expertise as a technical director and theater educator.

Principal Heidi Foley Honored for Leadership



Principal Foley was selected as the recipient of the 2025 Leadership Award from MINNDEPENDENT. Her award will be presented at the 2025 Private and Independent Education Awards on April 27.

The MINNDEPENDENT Awards Committee, a group comprised of individuals from education, corporations, and community leadership, reviewed several outstanding nominations and felt Principal Foley best reflected all the characteristics of the Leadership Award:

- Inspire passion and purpose within themselves and their teams.
- Propose and successfully implement innovative ideas that drive progress.
- Exemplify the highest standards of integrity and ethical leadership.
- Foster positive change by effectively communicating with key stakeholders, both internal and external.
- Serve as steadfast advocates for the importance of private and independent education in Minnesota.

Dr. David Sorkin, president, shared, “Heidi’s legacy is one of excellence, positive change, and transformative impact. Her leadership has unequivocally elevated the experience for faculty, staff, students, and parents at Academy of Holy Angels. Her dedication and leadership clearly embody the qualities celebrated by the MINNDEPENDENT Leadership Award, making her a truly deserving recipient.”

Around Campus



Anya Anderson Named 2025 Athena Award Winner

Anya Anderson, a senior at Academy of Holy Angels and alumni of Nativity of Mary School, was named the recipient of the 2025 Athena Award, which honors the outstanding senior female athlete from high schools across Minnesota. Anya’s achievements in both softball and hockey, along with her leadership and academic excellence, have made her a standout student-athlete.

Henry Lechner Breaks All-Time Scoring Record in Boys Hockey



Senior captain Henry Lechner broke the school’s all-time scoring record in boys hockey! Henry earned his 253rd career point in the Stars’ win over Hudson, WI on January 25, surpassing the previous record held by Danny Mattson ‘09. Danny was present to witness this historic moment and personally congratulate Henry on his accomplishment. Henry, who was a Mr. Hockey Finalist, plans to continue his hockey career at the University of St. Thomas next year.

Successful Food Drive Led by Campus Ministry Team (CMT)



In March, to celebrate the Lenten season, the school community contributed to the CMT Lenten Item Drive. All donations were distributed by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul before spring break.

Stars Earn Triple 'A' Nomination



Congratulations to seniors Ellie Krings and John Schletty on being selected as AHA's 2025 Triple 'A' Award nominees! This award honors high school seniors throughout the state who have an outstanding grade point average and who participate in League-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities.

Girls Hockey Plays at State Tournament



The winter sports teams showcased outstanding performances, with a particularly exciting season for the Stars girls hockey team, which secured fourth place in the Class A State Tournament. "Their hard work, teamwork, and perseverance throughout the season have been nothing short of inspiring. Their success not only demonstrates their dedication to their sport but also reflects the strong character and commitment to excellence that we foster here at Holy Angels," shared Dr. David Sorkin, president.

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards



Congratulations to Elizabeth Mejia-Quintanilla '25, Calli Holmes '25, and Gabriella Olson '28 (pictured alongside art teacher Andrea Bagdon) for their recent achievements in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards! Over 340,000 entries were submitted this year, and these STARS had amazing results in both the art and writing categories.



The AHA Learning Center staff (left to right): Jim Gunderson - RTI Coordinator, Sarah Miles - Reading Specialist, Keri Brenden - Learning Variations Counselor, Shane Cody - Math Teacher & Department Chair, Katy Kieffer - Math Teacher.

Supporting Student Success Through the Learning Center

Academy of Holy Angels' (AHA) college preparatory programs and academic excellence are a cornerstone of the school's reputation. Recognized as one of only ten schools in Minnesota to receive the prestigious Platinum recognition from the College Board for its Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Roll, AHA is a school that thrives on challenging students to reach their full academic potential. This honor recognizes schools with the highest participation rates in AP courses, coupled with outstanding AP exam results — leading to college credits for students even before graduation.

However, not all students begin their high school journey equally prepared for this rigorous academic environment. Students come to AHA from over 100 different grade schools, with a wide variety of curriculum levels and academic experiences. Additionally, the COVID-19

pandemic, which disrupted learning across the globe, continues to impact many students, some who are in need of additional support in order to rise to the challenges of a college preparatory high school.

Personalized Programs Within the Learning Center

AHA's Learning Center plays a vital role in supporting students who need additional academic assistance. The center's staff consists of three full-time employees who work closely with students to ensure they receive appropriate accommodations based on their specific needs. There are three primary programs within the Learning Center that work in tandem to ensure all students receive the personalized support they need.

"Learning variations within our AHA community are essential for our collective strength."

- **Learning Variations(LV):** This program provides support, structure, and mentoring to students with diagnosed learning differences in order for them to be successful. Using a tailored approach is crucial for students who may otherwise struggle to keep up in a more traditional learning environment. In certain situations, AHA partners with colleagues at Richfield Public Schools for additional resources.
- **Response to Intervention (RTI):** Not all students who need academic assistance have a formal learning variation plan. The RTI program is designed to help those students who require extra support in areas such as study skills, organization, and time management. Through targeted interventions, students in the RTI program are taught how to build the academic skills they need to succeed. This program helps them navigate the challenges of a high school education, ensuring they don't fall behind and remain on track to graduate.
- **Specialized Reading and Math Support:** In addition to the Learning Variations and RTI programs, AHA employs a reading specialist and a part-time math specialist. These specialists work with students in small groups or on an individualized basis. Through personalized learning plans, targeted interventions, and specific learning strategies, students receive the academic boost they need in these critical areas.

A Vision for the Future

The Learning Center is currently housed on the third floor in what many alumni may remember as the old typing lab. Although the center is large and light-filled, it needs updating. The school is exploring upgrades to the space in order to enhance the experience for the students and teachers who are using it.

Holy Angels is grateful to supporters of this program. Carla Steger Cable '78 and Phil Cable, parents of AHA alums Catherine Cable Heger '05, Bridget Cable Barth '08, and Jack Cable '13, have been one example through their *Academic Dedication and Perseverance Scholarship**.



Carla Steger Cable '78 and Phil Cable established the Academic Dedication and Perseverance Scholarship in 2021.

Carla shared, "A community lacking diverse learners misses out on vital creative solutions and innovative thinking. Obstacles are not excuses, but rather the very terrain upon which our greatest strengths are forged. Learning variations within our AHA community are essential for our collective strength. Embracing and celebrating these differences is a necessity for the school's continued growth and success."

By expanding academic support services and improving a variety of learning environments, AHA will continue to provide students with the tools they need to succeed academically, secure college admissions, and ultimately graduate with the skills and knowledge required to thrive in the next phase of their education.

**The Academic Dedication and Perseverance Scholarship was established in 2021 by Carla Steger Cable '78 and Phil Cable. The scholarship is for a junior or senior who has demonstrated that they can navigate through and excel in their studies while accessing educational resources in the AHA Learning Variations program. If you would like to contribute towards this scholarship please contact Jesse Foley '89 at jfoley@ahastars.org.*

Planning the Future – For You & AHA



Generosity comes in many forms. Legacy (or planned) giving provides you the opportunity to make a meaningful impact as well as provide tax advantages to you and your family.

Here at AHA, legacy donors have already spurred growth in the school's endowment - which now stands at over \$5 million, provided student scholarships in perpetuity, and funded key facility improvements like our *iCenter for STEM Education*.

For donors like you, a legacy commitment can be one of the most fulfilling ways to make a lasting difference to the causes that matter most to you. These legacy gifts offer a unique opportunity to maximize your charitable impact beyond your lifetime. We encourage you to visit our website for our online legacy-giving resources that many have found helpful.

Where there's a will...

No matter your age or status, everyone needs a plan; yet **nearly 70% of Americans don't have a will**. A will can help bring:

- **Security:** Creating your will allows you to communicate important financial and healthcare decisions, so you and your loved ones are prepared for whatever the future may hold.
- **Peace of mind:** A will allows you to provide for the people you love, so they will always be supported.
- **Impact:** By including an optional planned gift in your will, you can continue to support your favorite causes, like AHA.

That's a big reason why AHA has partnered with FreeWill, which gives our community members **FREE** access to **online estate planning resources**. Their tools can guide you through the whole process of completing a will in as little as 20 minutes.



Visit <https://academyofholyangels.mygiftlegacy.org/will-and-trust> to learn more. Creating your will and legacy can build a bright future for yourself, your loved ones, and future generations of students at AHA.

Is AHA already in your will?

Please let us know, so we can properly thank you and enroll you in the AHA Legacy Society, a group of more than 110 community members who have already included AHA in their will or estate plan. If your will is in place but you would like to add Holy Angels as a beneficiary, contact us about a codicil which allows donors the opportunity to conveniently add a charity to their existing will.

For more information, contact:

Brian McCartan (bmccartan@ahastars.org, 612-798-2618) or Jesse Foley '89 (jfoley@ahastars.org, 612-798-2621).



Tickets still available!

Starfest auction and gala, AHA's largest annual fundraiser, is coming up quickly on Saturday, May 3! There are still event tickets and raffle tickets available! Visit our website for details.

In Loving Memory

Please help us remember and pray for those in our AHA community who have died.

ALUMNI

Diana Drury Bauman '66 (2/8/2025)

Amy Bussen '85 (2/22/2025)

Millicent "Millie" Dosh '57 (2/2/2025) sister to Mary Teresa Storms '48 +, Madonna Adams '54, mother to Paul Dosh '92, aunt to Sr. Catherine Marie Adams OCD '91, Father James Adams '94, Margaret Adams '95, Mary Adams Norton '98, Joseph Adams '00, Michael Adams '05

Margaret Moskalik Fitzgerald '65 (2/2/2025) sister to Rita Fernandez '66 & Carol Feigal '69 +, sister-in-law to Stephanie Moskalik '68

Margaret "Peg" O'Connor Franzen '53 (12/12/2024) first cousin to Ann Kjorstad's grandmother

Dorothy Funk '14 (2/26/2025) sister to Aaron '93, Ryan '01, Geena '12

Mary Kay Pawlak Gillen '59 (5/31/2024)

Ann Groebner Hagen '63 (10/31/2024) sister to Lorrain Janson '66 & Susan Prom '70

Donna Johnson '62

Mark Komisky '83 (4/17/2024)

Peter Madden '76 (3/11/2025) brother to Joan Madden '62, Julie Madden '65 & Jacqueline Madden '78

Gregory Maurer '79 (1/21/2025) brother to Janice Eastvold '72, Therese Feldmeier '76 & Steven Maurer '76

Marie Hoy Merrigan '48 (11/27/2024) mother to Mike Merrigan '76 & Kevin Merrigan '78, grandmother to Conor Merrigan '05, Bridget Merrigan '07 & Michael Merrigan '11

Linda Sullivan '62 (2/26/2025)

Nicole Villelli '04 (2/7/2025) sister to Stacy Villelli '01

Phyllis Sheedy Wallace '59 (8/31/2024)

Carol Cooper White-Tillemans '67 (2/16/2025) mother to Christopher White '90 & Corrisa White '97



COMMUNITY MEMBERS

John Bianchi (12/20/2024) grandfather to Mario Bianchi '13, Isabel Bianchi '16

Nancy Brakke (1/13/2025) Mother to Theresa De Grace and grandmother to Daniel '12, Madeleine '14, Isabelle '19, Olivia '17, & Eva '25

Robin Cerny (2024) mother to Colton Cerny '08

Mike Cusick (3/31/2024) father-in-law to Andrew Taylor '90, grandfather to Sylvie Taylor '25

Sheila Helm (1/15/2025) mother to Madeline Helm '14 & Sarah Helm '17

Jeff Hitchcock (3/17/2025) father to Jameson '26 & Juju '27 Hitchcock

Michael Kelash (2/13/2025) father to Matthew '98 and Laura '00 Kelash. Brother to Kathleen Kelash Hansen '74, Elaine Kelash '79, Joyce Kelash Dominique '75, Linda Kelash-Cannavo '81, Paul Kelash '82, uncle to TaKeyah Dominique Grove '09, Gabrielle Dominique '13, Julia and Philip Hansen '08

Roger Lingofelt (5/27/2019) grandfather to Katelyn Meyers '08

Jeff Matthews (1/8/2025) brother to Pamela Kerber '73, Joe Matthews '76, John Matthews '79, Mary Matthews '87 & Amy Purintun '89, uncle to Jason Matthews '04, Paul Matthews '05, Alyssa Kerber '08, Natalie Kerber Schlosser '11, Nicholas Tracy '18, & Sarah Tracy '21

Charles McDonald (7/17/2024) father to Stephen McDonald '82, Judy McDonald '82 & Kristine McKenna '87

Mary Rae Schmelz (11/29/2024) mother to Mary J Schmelz Desautels '76, Paul Schmelz '78, grandmother to Patrick Gazich '15 and aunt to Terri Schmelz Madsen '76+

Diane Taylor Schutts (10/31/2024)

Deacon James Thornton, Jr. (2/23/2025) father to Mary Kraft '78, Ann Kleiner '79, Susan Thronton-Ball '81

Kathe White (1/15/2025) wife to Todd White '80

To have someone remembered, contact the Alumni Office at alumni@ahastars.org. These names were those that Holy Angels was notified about prior to March 20, 2025. We apologize for omissions due to lack of information or error.

2025 REUNIONS

CLASS OF 1965

Reunion Luncheon at the Edina Country Club on September 11. In addition, there will be a tour of Holy Angels on September 12 from 10am-Noon. Contact Sheila Clifford Lind for more information. smlind13@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1975

Reunion will take place at Holy Angels on Saturday, October 4 from 4pm-7pm. Contact Terri Bungert Roth for more information. terrikroth@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1980

Reunion will take place in the fall of 2025. Date and location TBD. Contact Tim Kenney for more details. TKenney62@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1985

Reunion will take place at Rock the Lawn on Friday, June 13. For more information contact Dan Becker at djsbecker@gmail.com or Jimmy Dunn at jimmyaym@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1990

Reunion will take place at Rock the Lawn on Friday, June 13. For more information contact Dan O'Rourke. orourkedj@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1995

Reunion date and place are TBD. For more information and/or to help contact Amy Peterson or Angie Olson Biltz.angie.biltz@yahoo.com

CLASS OF 2000

No plan yet. Contact Erin Flynn Rider for more information and/or to help.erinrider2019@yahoo.com

CLASS OF 2005

At Rock the Lawn on June 13. For more information contact Heidi Hunter heidi.hunter4@gmail.com

Find us on:



Facebook: Academy of Holy Angels



Facebook: Academy of Holy Angels Alumni



Instagram: @academyofholyanagels



Twitter: @aha_stars



Or the web: www.academyofholyanagels.org



once Upon a Mattress
Music by MARY RODGERS, Lyrics by MARSHALL BARER, Book by JAV THOMPSON, DEAN FULLER, and MARSHALL BARER

25 April - 10 May 2025
Performance dates and times:
25, 26 April: 7 pm, 27 April: 4 pm *, 2, 9, 10 May: 7 pm *
*27 April and 2 May ASL Interpreted Performances

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