

IMPACT

REPORT • 2025

*HER
POWER.
HER
FUTURE.*

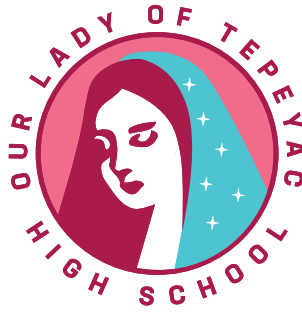
Melannie Gonzalez,
Class of 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION, VALUES, OLT PLEDGE	03	¡CREEMOS! WE BELIEVE	10
ON THE COVER	04	HONORING A LEGACY	11
LEADERSHIP LETTER	05	FUTURE LEADERS	12
OUR LADY OF TEPEYAC HIGH SCHOOL 2024-2025 ADVISORY BOARD, BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: PAUL VIRILIO	06	REMOVING BARRIERS	13
		ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT	14
WHO WE SERVE	07	FY 2025 INCOME AND EXPENSES	15
FACULTY/ALUMNA FEATURE	08	HONOR ROLL OF DONORS	16-21
CLASS OF 2025	09	IN KIND DONATIONS	22

2228 SOUTH WHIPPLE STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60623 | 773.522.0023 | OURLADYOFTEPEYAC.ORG



MISSION

Our Lady of Tepeyac High School is a Roman Catholic girls' secondary school deeply rooted in the Little Village neighborhood that provides a multicultural educational experience, developing each young woman to her full intellectual and spiritual potential in an environment that values learning, linked to faith, family and community.

VALUES

Tepeyac embraces its core values selected by our students, faculty, alums, and board members. These values are an integral part of our school community, anchoring faculty, administration and students in living out the importance of Tepeyac's mission.

TEPEYAC PLEDGE

We are Tepeyac Girls
We seek opportunity
We are college bound
We are united
We will be of service to each other and our world
We will strive for excellence
We believe in ourselves
We believe in each other
We believe in Our Lady of Tepeyac!

TEPEYAC CORE VALUES
OPPORTUNITY — UNITY
SERVICE — EXCELLENCE

A SHINING EXAMPLE OF A TEPEYAC GIRL: MELANNIE GONZALEZ, CLASS OF 2025



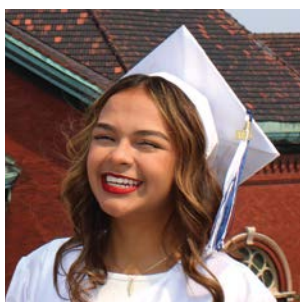
From the first day she walked through Tepeyac's doors, Melannie Gonzalez embodied everything it means to be a Tepeyac Girl. Always smiling and always willing to serve, Melannie has been a joyful, dependable presence in our school community.

A natural leader with exceptional people skills and a warm, welcoming presence, Melannie served as a Student Ambassador, sharing her Tepeyac experience with middle school girls with warmth and authenticity. For four years, she was also a ¡Creemos! Student Host, welcoming donors and representing Tepeyac with pride.

Melannie's talents shined brightly on stage as well. She generously shared her beautiful singing voice at school Masses and our annual fundraiser, while also performing in numerous community and Chicagoland productions.

Her academic journey was not without challenges, but Melannie worked hard—pushing herself to do her best and seeking, trusting, and acting on the support of Tepeyac teachers. She was a four-year scholar through the Madonna Foundation, where she embraced mentoring, career and college exposure, and opportunities to grow as a confident, service-minded leader. Her determination has paid off in a remarkable way: she has earned a full tuition scholarship to Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago, where she will pursue her dream of becoming a music teacher.

Melannie's success has been strengthened by the unwavering love and support of her parents, who have encouraged her every step of the way. She is a perfect example of a Tepeyac Girl—gracious, hardworking, talented, and ready to make her mark on the world. **Her Power. Her Future.**



“TEPEYAC HAS TAUGHT ME TO COME OUT OF MY SHELL AND HELPED ME BECOME THE PERSON I AM TODAY. BEING A TEPEYAC GIRL MEANS MAKING NEW CONNECTIONS, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES, AND CREATING AMAZING MEMORIES ALONG THE WAY! THOSE ARE THE THINGS THAT MAKE ME THE PROUDEST TEPEYAC GIRL.”

—Melannie, Class of 2025

Photo credit: Giselle Esparza, OLT Class of '23

PROUD TO SERVE

DEAR TEPEYAC COMMUNITY,

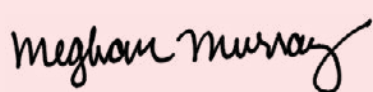
As we reflect on this past school year, our first as President and Vice President of Mission & Engagement, we do so with deep gratitude. Following the retirement of Joni Thompson after 34 years of extraordinary leadership, we stepped into our roles with reverence for her legacy and a shared commitment to Our Lady of Tepeyac High School's mission: to educate and empower young women of faith, intellect, and strength.

This year brought many challenges, as families and schools across the country navigated a time of uncertainty. Yet in the face of it all, our young women and their families showed resilience, our faculty and staff rose to the occasion, and our community continued to believe in the power of faith-centered education. We are especially proud of the steps our team has taken to strengthen our academic offerings and deepen our commitment to a girl-centered culture. At Tepeyac, every young woman is seen, heard, and reminded that she is made in God's image—and every day, she receives the tools to grow in knowledge, character, and confidence.

At Tepeyac, **Her Power. Her Future.** is more than a theme—it's a promise. It means equipping every student to lead with courage, serve with compassion, and pursue her dreams with determination. We invite you to walk with us as we continue this important work. Your partnership and generosity make all the difference.

THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN OUR MISSION AND IN THE POWER OF A TEPEYAC GIRL.

WITH GRATITUDE,



Meghan Murray
President



Lily Kennedy '06
Vice President of
Mission & Engagement



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: PAUL VIRGILIO



Introduced to Our Lady of Tepeyac High School through his sharing parish, St. Francis de Sales, Paul Virgilio was quickly moved by the school's mission and impact. "The success of OLT was so very impressive, and we wanted to do what we could to assist in the successful educational outcomes and promote the school," Paul shared.

Paul joined the board, along with his wife Adrienne, lending his expertise to the Creemos Committee and the Facilities & Finance Committee, securing sponsorships through business contacts and helping plan for the school's long-term facilities needs.

Paul values serving alongside board members "committed to the advancement of the mission of OLT — all people who really care about the young women at Tepeyac." Quoting school leadership, he reflected, "In a world that can be quick to overlook or underestimate young women of color, belief in their brilliance is not only meaningful — it's essential." Looking ahead, he hopes to strengthen OLT's foundation and expand awareness across Chicago, guided by the words of Jana Stanfield:

"I CANNOT DO ALL THE GOOD THE WORLD NEEDS, BUT THE WORLD NEEDS ALL THE GOOD I CAN DO."

Our Lady of Tepeyac High School 2024-2025

ADVISORY BOARD

Dalia Almanza '04

Thierer Family Foundation,
Community Engagement
Manager, Vice Chair

Summer Mary Krysiak Bittár, PhD.

St. Vincent de Paul Seminary,
Asst. Professor & Director

Robert Balmos

Bank of America Merrill Lynch,
Managing Director

Irene Balmos '86

BNP Paribas, Administrative
Assistant, Chair

Estela Cervantes '88, CRC, LPC, MA

El Valor, Quality Assurance
Manager, OLT Parent

John Connolly, Esq.

Brady, Connolly & Masuda,
P.C., Founding Partner

Lolly Lederer Connolly, LCSW, Ph.D

Private Practice, Kenilworth

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Saint Viator High School,
Teacher and Theater Director,
(Retired)

Helen A. Dumas, MEd.

St. Sabina School,
President/Principal Emeritus

Janet Each

Chicago Public Schools,
Teacher

Jim Earner

The Big Shoulders Fund,
Financial Consultant

Citlaly Gonzalez, Psy.D

Easter Seals,
Clinical Psychologist

Patricia Gutekanst

Cove School,
Vocation Coordinator

Monica Medina '96

TIAA/Nuveen,
Senior Accounting Manager

Stephanie Rodriguez '06

University of Illinois Chicago
Business Career Center,
Associate Director

Abigail Romo 17'

MacNeal Hospital,
Certified Nursing Assistant

Dan Thompson

Matteson District 159,
Dir. of Special Education
and Pupil Services (Retired)

Johanna L. Tracy, Esq.

Carden & Tracy, Partner/Owner

Kevin T. Veugeler, Esq.

Healy Scanlan Veugeler
and Gannon, Partner

Adrienne Laughlin Virgilio

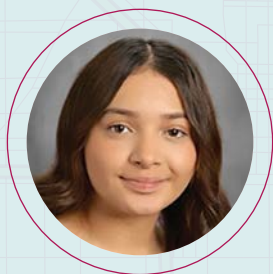
Virgilio & Associates, Ltd.,
Principal, Administration
& Finance

Paul Virgilio S.E., P.E.,

Virgilio & Associates, Ltd.,
Principal, Structural Engineer

By The Numbers

WHO WE SERVE



60623

Little Village



60804

Cicero



60629

West Lawn



60632

Brighton Park



60608

Pilsen

**SCHOOL
YEAR
2024-2025:**

20

Different zip codes
represented in the student body

\$34,660

Average Family Income

\$6,900

Tuition Rate

\$4,800

Average Financial Aid
Award per Student

98%

Receive Need-Based
Financial Aid

GRADE SCHOOLS OUR STUDENTS REPRESENT:



22 CATHOLIC



36 PUBLIC



7 CHARTER

FACULTY & ALUMNA FEATURE



ESMERALDA ALVAREZ, '10 FROM TEPEYAC GRAD TO REAL ESTATE ENTREPRENEUR

Esmeralda Alvarez, Class of 2010, is the founder of Key to Chicago, a real estate brand built on values she traces back to Our Lady of Tepeyac High School: authenticity, service, and heart. As a bilingual agent with a background in hospitality and social work, she brings empathy, strong communication, and problem-solving to every client interaction.

"I FELT CALLED TO BUILD SOMETHING OF MY OWN. CREATING KEY TO CHICAGO WAS ONE OF THE BEST DECISIONS I'VE EVER MADE—IT LETS ME LEAD WITH PURPOSE, SERVE WITH HEART, AND BUILD REAL RELATIONSHIPS. EVERYTHING TEPEYAC TAUGHT ME LIVES IN HOW I SHOW UP FOR MY CLIENTS."

At Tepeyac, Esmeralda balanced academics, a part-time job, and leadership roles—playing volleyball, joining NHS, and serving as a Student Ambassador. She remembers the unwavering support of her teachers and the deep sense of belonging that shaped her confidence.

After earning degrees in Social Work and Criminology from Hope College, she worked with English language learners, then returned to Tepeyac as a high school recruiter. Now, as an entrepreneur, she continues to give back to her community. **"What Tepeyac gave me can't be measured in grades or diplomas—it lives in how I lead, how I show up, and what I leave behind."**



STAFF FEATURE: ANNA LEO, DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING COORDINATOR

Anna Leo joined the Our Lady of Tepeyac community during the 2024–2025 school year as Development and Marketing Coordinator. A 2019 graduate of Calvin University in Grand Rapids, MI, Anna brings with her four years of experience teaching at the middle and elementary school levels. One of the highlights of her first year was planning the ¡Creemos! Benefit for Scholarships—an event she loved attending and found especially meaningful. Seeing so many friends of Tepeyac gathered in support of the school's mission showed the strong community that the school has created. She is energized by the opportunity to build purposeful relationships with students, staff, and donors, and is committed to helping the Tepeyac community grow in its strength and reach.

CLASS OF 2025

OUR LADY OF TEPEYAC HIGH SCHOOL HELD ITS GRADUATION MASS AND CEREMONY ON MAY 22, 2025.



100%

Of the Class of 2025 graduated

62%

Were first-generation high school graduates

\$9.3M

Earned in scholarship monies

73%

Will be first-generation college students

300+ College Acceptances Earned

20 Full Tuition Scholarships Earned

02 Full Tuition + Room & Board Scholarships Earned

Colleges being attended by the Class of 2025 include:

- Arrupe College of Loyola
- Concordia University
- DePaul University
- Denison University
- Dominican University
- Malcolm X College
- North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University
- Olivet Nazarene University
- Penn Foster University
- Richard J. Daley College
- Roosevelt University
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- St. Xavier University
- Triton College
- Trinity Christian College
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- University of Wisconsin Madison

¡CREEMOS! WE BELIEVE BENEFIT FOR SCHOLARSHIPS CELEBRATING 30 YEARS:

On May 2nd, Our Lady of Tepeyac High School celebrated the 30th Annual ¡Creemos! We Believe Benefit for Scholarships—an evening honoring our mission and the hard work of our young women.

We proudly recognized Joni Thompson with the ¡Creemos! Award for her 34 years of service as a teacher, principal, and the school's first president. We also honored Dan Thompson with the Guardian Angel Award for his dedicated volunteer work in both academic support and as the leader of our Athletics Department. Ebany Guerra, Class of 2020, delivered the keynote address, sharing how her Tepeyac experience shaped her path.

***IT WAS A NIGHT FILLED WITH GRATITUDE, INSPIRATION,
AND A CLEAR COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF TEPEYAC GIRLS.***

***SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 24, 2026
CHICAGO UNION STATION***



HONORING A LEGACY The Joni Thompson College Scholarship Fund

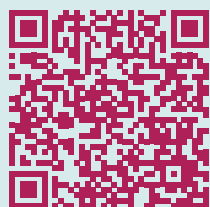
At this year's ¡Creemos! celebration, Our Lady of Tepeyac High School proudly announced the creation of the Joni Thompson Scholarship Fund, honoring Joni's 34 years of extraordinary service and her pivotal role in founding the College Readiness Program in 2008.

The scholarship, which will be awarded for the first time to a graduate from the Class of 2026, continues Joni's legacy by helping Tepeyac students overcome one of the greatest barriers to higher education: cost.

In a time when financial aid is uncertain and college costs continue to rise, your support is more important than ever. A gift to the Joni Thompson Scholarship Fund is an investment in equity, opportunity, and the future of young women determined to succeed.

Join us in honoring Joni's legacy by helping to close the college affordability gap for Tepeyac graduates. Your generosity will ensure our students have the resources they need to thrive in college—and far beyond.

Thank you for standing with our students and celebrating the lifelong impact of Joni Thompson.



*TO SUPPORT THE JONI THOMPSON COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FUND, VISIT:
[OURLADYOFTEPEYAC.ORG/GIVING/
JONI-THOMPSON-SCHOLARSHIP-FUND](https://OURLADYOFTEPEYAC.ORG/GIVING/JONI-THOMPSON-SCHOLARSHIP-FUND)*

GIFTS CAN ALSO BE MADE BY CHECK, PAYABLE TO OUR LADY OF TEPEYAC HIGH SCHOOL.

Please write "Joni Thompson" in the memo line to designate your gift. Checks may be mailed to the address listed on the back of this Report.

TEPEYAC STUDENTS LEAD WITH RESPECT IN DEPAUL'S CATHOLIC FUTURE TEACHER LEADER PROGRAM

By Cynthia Rodriguez, College Readiness Director

At Our Lady of Tepeyac, leadership is more than a concept; it's a practice. This year, our Class of 2025 became the first to participate in the DePaul Catholic Future Teacher Leader (CFTL) program, a five-week curriculum designed to help students reflect on and develop their leadership skills. The program culminated with students identifying areas of the school they wished to improve and creating solutions to address them. Their projects focused on improving school discipline policies, making changes to the daily schedule, and strengthening school culture and community. Students presented their projects to the staff and faculty of DePaul University's College of Education as well as OLT administration.



Out of this program, two student-led projects continued on to participate in the Catholic Future Teacher Leader Forum at DePaul University in early May. One group surveyed the Classes of 2025 and 2026 to learn more about students' experiences with favoritism and mutual respect at OLT. In addition to being presented at the forum, these findings and solutions were also shared with OLT staff and faculty at our end-of-year meeting.

Our initial student leadership group has now graduated, and we are collaborating with our new group of student leaders for the next cycle of the CFTL program. The Classes of 2026 and 2027 will carry the program forward, building on the foundation laid by the Class of 2025 and continuing the growth of student voice and leadership at OLT.

REMOVING BARRIERS

SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT PAVES THE WAY FOR TEPEYAC GRADUATES

A Chicago-area family foundation continues its generous commitment to Our Lady of Tepeyac High School graduates through a privately funded scholarship program that has already opened doors for several students. **Tepeyac students accepted into the Gies College of Business at the University of Illinois are eligible for a scholarship that covers any tuition not met by financial aid, full room and board, and study abroad opportunities.** By removing financial barriers, the foundation enables our young women to fully engage in their college experience and pursue academic and global learning opportunities.

The foundation also provides the same level of scholarship support for Tepeyac graduates who attend Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago, a two-year program focused on academic rigor and affordability. This long-standing investment in Tepeyac students reflects the foundation's deep belief in their potential and the transformative impact of a Tepeyac education.

Tepeyac has two students who will start at the Gies College of Business this summer and six who will begin at Arrupe College.

Her Power. Her Future.



Valeria Acosta, Tepeyac Class of 2023, a current Gies scholar says:



THIS SCHOLARSHIP HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY TO THRIVE, BUT ALSO TO ENJOY MY TIME AT UNIVERSITY. IT HAS PROVIDED THE SUPPORT I NEED TO BE CONFIDENT IN ALL OF MY ABILITIES — WHETHER INTERNALLY, FINANCIALLY, OR ACADEMICALLY. THIS SUPPORT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO REACH FOR BIG GOALS, LIKE MY SUMMER INTERNSHIP AT J.P. MORGAN CHASE.

It means a lot to know that someone believes in my potential and is willing to invest in my future. While the scholarship has helped me financially, it has also shown me the importance of giving back — and I hope to one day support students just like me."

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

A Vision for Growth and Opportunity

At Our Lady of Tepeyac High School, we believe deeply in the potential of our young women. In a time when schools like ours face increased challenges — including limited funding and shifting public priorities — it's more important than ever to stay focused on what matters most: the success of our students.

This year, Christian Brothers Services worked with Tepeyac administration, faculty, alumna, parents and current students to complete a comprehensive academic assessment audit to strengthen our academic program. Coaching and implementation strategies for faculty and staff were financially supported by the Big Shoulders Fund and led by Christian Brothers Services.

As a result of the final report, here's what we've done to improve:

2024-2025 FOCUS:

- Strengthened instructional leadership through weekly coaching to improve classroom evaluations and teaching quality.
- Provided professional development focused on student-centered teaching, instructional technology, and support for English Language Learners.
- Completed curriculum mapping for core subjects aligned with state standards and college readiness.



2025-2026 FOCUS:

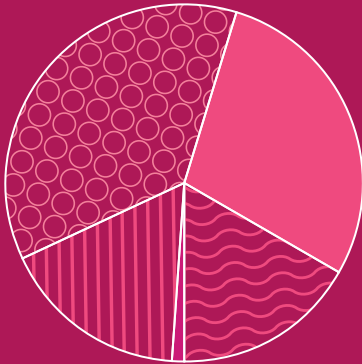
- Expanded curriculum with new electives, an 8-period day, an advanced math track and full four-year science access to enhance academic pathways and student engagement.
- Alignment of curriculum with quality assessments and ACT preparation.
- English Language Learner-focused professional development for all teachers through the University of Notre Dame (in partnership with the Big Shoulders Fund).



THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT, TEPEYAC IS GROWING STRONGER — CREATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERY STUDENT TO THRIVE IN HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND BEYOND.

FY 2025

INCOME & EXPENSES



INCOME

Total 100%

- Scholarship Grants (37%)
- Fundraisers (29%)
- Program Grants (17%)
- Tuition & Fees (17%)
- Interest & Investment Income (>1%)

Total Income*:

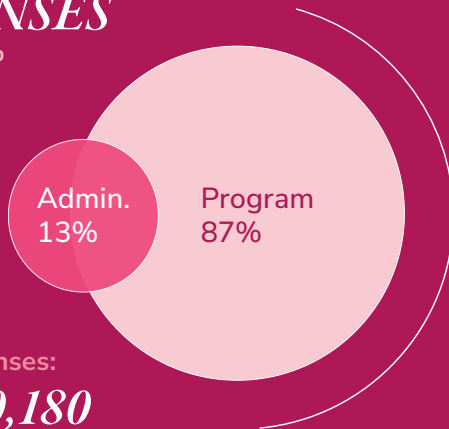
\$2,194,766

83%

of our income is a direct result of donations from individuals and foundations.

EXPENSES

Total 100%



Total Expenses:

\$2,160,180

87% of expenses are dedicated to providing quality, Catholic education to young women.

PROGRAM EXPENSES

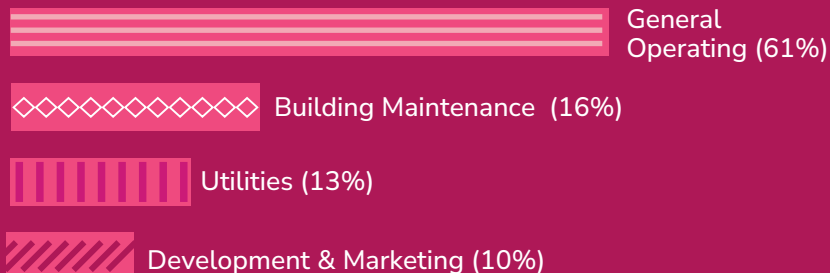
By Category—Total 100%



- Academics + Classroom Supplies (90%)
- Student Activities + Athletics (5%)
- College + Career Readiness (5%)

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Total 100%



**THANK YOU
TO ALL WHO
SUPPORTED
THIS EFFORT!**

FY2025

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

BENEFACTORS:

\$100,000+

Big Shoulders Fund
John and Rita Canning

PATRONS:

\$50,000-\$99,000

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Bill and Maureen McInerney
The Raitt Family Foundation

STEWARDS:

\$20,000-\$49,999

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SUPPORTERS:

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Dan and Joni Thompson
Mary Wolf and Ignacio Larrinau

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS



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\$1,000-\$4,999

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Noreen Campbell
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Mike Nolan
Therese O'Neill
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Stephanie Rodriguez
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Blaine and Amy White
Nancy Willis
Windy City Silkscreening
Elizabeth and Matt Zakaras



HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

ANGELS:

\$1-\$999

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Marilyn Aguayo
Crystal Aguilar
Jimena Aguilar
Mayra Alanis
Jose Alatorre
Gisell Alcantara
Joseph and Eileen Altenhoff
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Alfonso De La Luz
Bertha Alicia De La Luz
Nancy and Ralph DeLetto
Ann Demand
Mari Lynn Dempsey-Cobb

SNAPSHOT OF THE CLASS OF 2029:

07 LEGACY SCHOLARS

35 AMAZING STUDENTS

10 ACADEMIC
SCHOLARSHIPS

David Desjardins
Martha Dion
Mario DiVito
Dr. Margaret Dolan
Flannery Donahue
Addy Donahue
Fred and Mary Kate Donnelley
Margaret and Michael Dreznes
Imelda Duarte-Alvarez
Irene Duarte-Thelen
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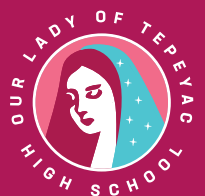
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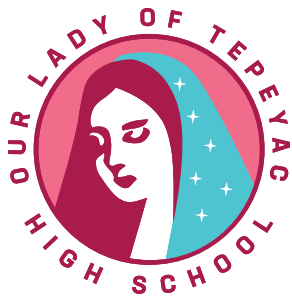
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— Ariana Valadez, Valedictorian, Class of 2025