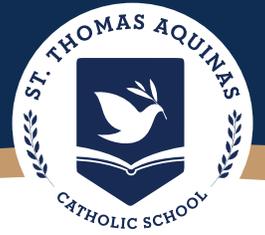


WILDCAT DEN

SEMI-ANNUAL CHRONICLE



Faith. Family. Foundation.

A Jumpstart to a Great Year at St. Thomas



WHAT'S INSIDE...

- 3 Message From Our Head of School
- 4 Back to School Highlights
- 5 New Graduates & College-bound Alumni
- 6 What's Happening at St. Thomas?
- 8 Exciting Updates Across Campus
- 10 Alumni Highlight
- 11 2025-2026 Annual Appeal
- 12 Sports Update
- 14 Connect with St. Thomas



Big Kids Lead & Little Kids Leap



Message from Our Head of School



MS. TRACY STRUB
Head of School

Dear St. Thomas Community,

It is my joy to welcome you to the second year of The Wildcat Den.

As we introduce this new edition—one of two you’ll receive each year—I am delighted to share a publication that brings together everything you love and hold dear about St. Thomas, while keeping you connected to all that is happening across our vibrant school.

Now in my third year as Head of School, I am immensely proud of all that we have accomplished together and energized by the promise of what lies ahead. We have **jumped into** this year with tremendous momentum—welcoming exceptional new teachers, uniting the community in a wide variety of new and beloved traditions, and renewing our commitment to all that is core to St. Thomas.

We are thrilled by the many improvements to our campus, made possible through the extraordinary support of our extended community. Every enhancement reflects your belief in our mission and your dedication to the students we serve.

Whether you are a current family, former parent, alum, grandparent, or friend of the school, please know that you are always welcome at St. Thomas.

Blessings,

Tracy Strub
Head of School



CLASS OF 2026



In 2025, we introduced “**Stock The Pantry,**” an ongoing, year-long initiative in which our school community supports local partners by providing essential self-stable items. On the first Friday of each month, the school collects donations that are delivered to one of our four partner pantries: The Black Rock Food Pantry, Nourish Bridgeport, the Thomas Merton Family Center, and The Daughters of Charity. Each grade is assigned a specific item to contribute, and parent volunteers, alongside our students, deliver the donations and help restock the shelves at each location. We launched this initiative to jumpstart service in our school and ensure it once again becomes a core, consistent, and deeply meaningful part of the education offered at St. Thomas.



Back to School Highlights

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

We are delighted to welcome our new faculty and staff to St. Thomas. Each brings unique talents, enthusiasm, and a deep commitment to our students. Pictured left to right, please join us in welcoming:

Mr. Szabi Varga – 7th & 8th Grade Math (Pre-Algebra, Algebra)

Mr. Varga is passionate about mathematics and has spent many years teaching middle and high school students. He brings strong content knowledge and a love of problem-solving to our middle school math program.

Iyannah Hasan – Pre-K3 Teaching Assistant

Ms. Hasan loves working with our youngest learners and especially enjoys singing, painting, and reading with the children. Her joyful presence helps create a warm and engaging early-childhood classroom.

Sabrina Rivera – Pre-K 3/4/5

Ms. Rivera joined St. Thomas last year as a Pre-K3 teaching assistant and quickly proved her talent in early-childhood education. She eagerly stepped into a lead teaching role, bringing love, joy, and enthusiasm to her classroom each day.

Mary Alice Manning – Kindergarten

Ms. Manning has deep roots in Catholic education, and with her master's degree in Special Education, she is dedicated to helping our kindergarten students shine. She brings expertise, patience, and a heart for young learners.

Kate Solway – 6th & 7th Grade ELA

Ms. Solway, who holds degrees in English and Secondary Education, is excited to share her love of literature and writing with our middle school students. She brings creativity, energy, and a passion for strong communication skills.

Joel Guerrier – 6th & 7th Grade Math & Geometry

Mr. Guerrier has taught math for many years at area schools and is thrilled to bring his expertise to St. Thomas. His passion for mathematics and commitment to student success strengthen our dynamic middle school math program.



New Pre-K Opportunities

In the 2025–26 school year, we expanded our Pre-K offerings in response to increased demand. In addition to our traditional Three-Year-Old and Four/Five-Year-Old Programs, we successfully introduced a third **blended Pre-K classroom** designed to serve children ages 3 to 5. This exciting addition brings 12 new students into the St. Thomas community and allows us to further capitalize on the exceptional teaching talent within our outstanding Early Childhood team.

St. Thomas offers tremendous and unique benefits for our Pre-K students thanks to our co-location with the K–8 program. Our youngest learners enjoy access to specialized subject-area teachers in **music, library, physical education, world languages, science and more**, enriching their school experience from the very start. In addition, our wide range of indoor and outdoor play spaces, along with flexible extended day options, make St.

Thomas an especially attractive environment for early learners and their families.

To learn more about our Pre-K offerings, download our brochure or visit our website at www.stasonline.net/academics/Pre-K

New Graduates & College-bound Alumni

In June 2025, St. Thomas proudly celebrated the graduation of 41 exceptional eighth graders—students whose journeys have been marked by resilience, achievement, and deep connections to our school community. Class Night was especially meaningful, as many departing families received their traditional plants, including several who have been part of St. Thomas for more than a decade such as the **Gidez, Spengler, Stern, Crotty, Levanat,** and **Kalagher** families. For the Gidez family, this milestone marks an extraordinary 20 years at St. Thomas.



The Class of 2025 leaves behind a rich legacy. Their time at St. Thomas included a CYO Championship win, navigating the challenges of COVID, and celebrating the introduction of new sports at St. Thomas. They also welcomed the return of a beloved international student from Spain, adding to the vibrancy of their final year.

Choate Rosemary Hall

Charles Rice
Fairfield Ludlowe
Michaela Andreasson
Alexis Brockmeyer
Eviana Haddad
Katherine Spengler
Riley Sullivan

Fairfield Prep

Ryder Brady
John Calderon
Michael Como
Joseph Corselli
Finn Crotty
William Davis
Spencer Eisenreich
Benjamin Espach
Brian Gidez

Drew Grayson

Charlie Hannant
Dylan Kalagher
Owen Lynch
Liam Mulligan
Michael Powers
Luke Vallerie

Fairfield Warde

Alexander
Macdonald

Greens Farms Academy

Hannah Rumball
Joel Barlow
Piper Burns

King School

Audrey Swanson
Lauralton Hall
Maisy Burch

Margaret Curran

Isabelle "Izzy" Glassman
Chloe Levanat
Brooke McCoy
Skye Meath
Anna Morris
Brooke Sabados
Gracie Pokoik
Olivia Stern

Notre Dame Prep

Winston Callejas

St. Joseph

Juliette Guilfoile
Grace Mooney
Moriah Powell

Liberty High School;

Acellus Academy
Alexander Ford

We extend a warm congratulations to our St. Thomas graduates who left us four years ago and are now beginning their college journeys. We are so proud of all that they have accomplished in high school and can't wait to cheer them on as they take this exciting next step. You'll find a full list of their college destinations below, an impressive collection of schools that reflects their hard work, talents, and character.



We also want to give a special shout-out to three members of the Class of 2020, who are likewise beginning their college adventures this fall: **Billy Mitchell** (University of Virginia), **Connor Towle** (College of the Holy Cross), and **Charlie Gulbin** (Catholic University).

To all of our college-bound Wildcats—good luck, stay in touch, and know that St. Thomas is always rooting for you.

What's Happening at St. Thomas?



SEPTEMBER

- We kicked off the year with **BINGO BEATS**, our brand-new HSA Community Gathering—and it sold out! Families danced, laughed, and made instant memories.
- **Community Coffees** returned before First Friday Mass, bringing back the warm, cozy, “good-to-be-together” vibe.



OCTOBER

- Wildcats laced up for our **4th Annual Walk-a-Thon**, taking a mile-long stride for our school.
- **Special Persons Day** broke attendance records! From Mass and student speakers to classroom games and a St. Thomas Tunes performance, our guests felt the love.
- **Trunk or Treat** dazzled with wildly creative car décor for Pre-K 5, and our middle schoolers turned up the country charm at a classic **Hoe Down** dance.
- High spirited **Pep Rally** celebrated our Fall Athletes!
- The 8th grade dominated the field, snagging the **Black and Orange Bowl Flag Football Game**.



NOVEMBER

- Our **Veterans Day** ceremony was truly moving—complete with a veteran guest speaker, a respectful flag-folding presentation, and patriotic songs from the St. Thomas Tunes.
- **Kindness Week** took center stage with Kindness Stations, cross-grade Buddy Programs, and meaningful service projects spreading joy across campus.



DECEMBER

A Very Merry St. Thomas

Fear not—holiday traditions are alive and thriving at St. Thomas! We've launched the season in true Wildcat style with:

- Advent Wreath Making
- Christmas Boutique
- Breakfast with Santa



...and the festivities are far from over!

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Christmas Concert

Join us for a joyful Celebration of Song presented by our talented St. Thomas students.

12.23.25
Arts and Athletics Center
St. Thomas Aquinas School
8:45 AM

Special Dedication Ceremony
Be part of the official dedication and recognition of the donors behind our Arts and Athletics Center, along with those supporting our newly dedicated classrooms.

We can't wait to celebrate more joy together at our upcoming events:

Christmas Concert

December 23 • 8:45 AM

Arts & Athletics Center at St. Thomas

A magical morning you won't want to miss!

Alumni Soiree

December 21 • 5:00-7:00 PM

Seagrape • Fairfield, CT

Get merry with your fellow Wildcats!

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL **Seagrape Fairfield, CT**

STA ALUMNI & FAMILIES HAPPY HOUR

Sunday, December 21st
5PM - 7PM
The Seagrape | Fairfield, CT

STA Swag, DJ Peter G, & Happy Hour Pricing!

Merry Christmas
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Exciting Updates Across Campus

A Brand-New Website!

In September, we launched our new, user-friendly website – a hub for everything you love about St. Thomas! The project got a fantastic start thanks to the creativity of Janie Paulmann (Class of 2018), an undergraduate graphic design major at TCU. From there, a dedicated team of parent volunteers worked tirelessly to develop the content, ensuring every page reflects the spirit and excellence of St. Thomas.

The new site is packed with incredible detail about our academic programs, athletics, and student life, making it easier than ever to explore what makes our school special. It even has a home for alumni and a parent portal to access everything you need in one place.

The site is visually vibrant, featuring candid photos of our students in action, as well as professional shots from a photo shoot by our 3rd-grade teacher, Ashley Ayers.

We encourage you to check it out for yourself and experience the excitement, energy, and heart of St. Thomas online.



WWW.STASONLINE.NET

A New Chapter for the Library



Thanks to the generosity of Richard Schultz, who made a substantial contribution toward this project, St. Thomas proudly unveils our new Library Learning Commons – a space designed for the needs of today's students. This innovative environment supports exciting new programming in coding, research, and technology, all while keeping a love of books at its heart.

The space is not only functional but also beautiful and inviting, providing a warm welcome to all who enter the school. The Library Learning Commons will be dedicated in memory of Richard's parents, **Richard and Mary Schultz**, and will continue to honor the memory of his aunt, **Helen M. Davis**. Both Helen and Mary are graduates of St. Thomas.



Harding | Halas Arts & Athletics Center

We are thrilled to celebrate the naming and grand transformation of the Harding | Halas Arts & Athletics Center!

This summer, thanks to the generosity of Jen and Peter Harding (1983) and their children ('14, '18, '18), along with the seven children of Dee and Peter Halas (each of whom graduated between 1963-77), we completed a full renovation of the St. Thomas Gym.

The updates include new floors, volleyball fixtures, a fresh coat of paint, stage sanding, and other improvements—creating a space that is bright, welcoming, and ready for all kinds of activity. The Center now serves as a true home for basketball practices and games (we are proud to host many games on campus!), our volleyball program and PE classes, as well as our Spring Musical and other theatrical productions.



Halas Family 1966

A formal dedication of our Arts & Athletics Center will occur at our Christmas Concert on December 23.

“Our parents made it to every performance, recital, play or game they possibly could. They would have loved this facility, and we are thrilled that current and future St. Thomas parents, grandparents and loved ones will share in the joy it brings.”
~ PAUL HALAS (1970)



Harding Family 2013

“The choice to donate to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School was an easy one. Pete and his siblings were educated at STA and when we moved back to Fairfield we enrolled all 5 of our kids there. It was a very special time filled with great traditions, memories and a faith-filled education that endures. We cherish our time at STA and our gratitude to the school and community is endless.”

~ THE HARDING FAMILY

Alumni Highlight

Honoring Our Classroom Naming Families – Donohue and Reese

The **Donohue family** have chosen to name one of our middle school classrooms in honor of the meaningful role St. Thomas has played in their lives. Though their connection to the school spans many programs and events—including Breakfast with Santa—the decision to support a middle school classroom reflects their belief in the importance of these formative years.

We also extend heartfelt thanks to **Nancy & James E. Reese III**, who are sponsoring our Math Resources Room. The Reese family has a deep connection to St. Thomas as parents of an alum, current grandparents, as well as a special tie to mathematics through the years spent by Nancy teaching and tutoring within our school community. Their gift coincides with the strengthening of our math intervention and enrichment programs and the formation of our new Math Olympiad teams.

Four Families, One St. Thomas Legacy

The Donohue family and its many generations—including grandfather Kevin Donohue, who brought joy as our Santa for 17 years at Breakfast with Santa—continue to give back and enrich the St. Thomas community today.

The Donohue family was part of St. Thomas from 2004 through 2023 under the Donohue, Levery, Morrison, and Cristodero names. We recently caught up with Mia ('19), Luke ('20), and Ava ('23) Cristodero to better understand why St. Thomas remains such an important part of their extended family's legacy.

Academic Gifts

Ava set the bar high early, valuing the opportunity to take Geometry as an 8th grader—a challenge that paved the way for her accelerated academic path. Now a junior at St. Joe's, she's breaking records by taking AP Calculus and excelling.

“Ludlowe High School assumed we spoke French at home because my French skills were so strong.”

Luke brought some excitement to the interview by speaking in French, a nod to his success in the Grand Concors contest. Mia spoke about how she has carried her Faith with her.

Favorite Memories

For Ava, Mia, and Luke, choosing a single favorite memory proved impossible.

Highlights included:

- Catholic Schools Week
- STA Basketball Tournament
- Christmas Concert
- Stations of the Cross
- K-8th Grade Buddy Program



Across all three, a common theme emerged: these events were quintessential community moments!

Impact of the St. Thomas Journey

The greatest takeaway? Friends who become family.

Advice to Current STA Students

Their message to today's students is simple and energizing: Be excited about everything. Get involved. Try new things.

“The level of togetherness created by St. Thomas among students and families never leaves you.”

2025-2026 Annual Appeal

The Alumni Stories Project

This past year, we captured the journeys of our Pre-K through 8th grade alumni to understand what truly endures—friendships that shaped them, teachers who inspired them, the confidence gained, and the spirit found. These are the moments that define St. Thomas, and they remind us why our mission matters.

As we launch the 2025-2026 Annual Appeal Campaign, we're highlighting these stories because they show the lasting impact of a St. Thomas education. To keep offering this experience—while keeping tuition affordable and remaining competitive—we rely on the generosity of our community to support our annual operating budget. We can't do it alone.

We invite you to support this work and explore these meaningful alumni stories on our website. Visit stasonline.net/admissions/alumni-stories and watch the eight alumni videos that capture the heart of St. Thomas. These stories make us proud—and they inspire us to continue delivering the education and community that has endured for over 100 years at St. Thomas.

Please consider making a gift today to help us continue writing the next chapter of St. Thomas stories.



Then. Now. Always. The Impact of a St. Thomas Education.



A Lifetime of Friendships



A Strong Start for Bright Minds



The Power of Community



Values & Service



Watch Alumni Stories @ stasonline.net



Leadership & Confidence



Building Spirit through Sports



A Stage for Everyone



Keeping with Tradition

Sports Update



Wildcat Pride in Every Stride

St. Thomas Shines at Annual Basketball Tournament

It was an unforgettable three-weekend run for St. Thomas at this year's basketball tournament, where three of our teams competed for their division championship and our community delivered big both on and off the court.

Our first victory came from a powerhouse squad made up of our 2025 CYO JV Champions and some fierce 8th-grade talent to defeat St. Catherine's and secure the **Varsity Girls Championship**.

Next up, our young but mighty 5th-grade girls, coached by former college basketball star and St. Thomas parent alum, Colleen Cimador, delivered one of the most exciting games of the tournament. They battled a combined 5th/6th-



grade team from St. James, pulling out a thrilling double-overtime win to claim the **JV Girls Title**.

The tournament concluded with the 6th-grade boys championship—the final game of the event. In a tough matchup against St. James, our boys narrowly missed the JV Boys Trophy by just two points. It was a hard fought battle!

Also, our 4th grade JJV girls captured the crown as the only undefeated team in their division.

Beyond the on-court success, the tournament was filled with community wins: a lively 50/50 raffle, enthusiastic alumni and families running the scoreboard, and a spirited **Fowl Shooting** contest benefiting Operation Hope. **Thanks to our generous participants, over 17 turkeys were donated to help local families in need.**



VOLLEYBALL

This season found the lady Wildcats back on the floor for another exciting season of volleyball. The 26 girls from grades 5-8 worked hard on their bumps, sets, spikes and passing. The girls played in three weekend tournaments leading up to the Diocesan Championship where they found themselves just out of the championship round. The girls are gearing up for the upcoming spring season!



ST. THOMAS GOLF: A "Par-Fect" Season

Our St. Thomas golf team wrapped up its 8th season, with an enthusiastic team of 34 golfers from 4th–8th grade. Over the course of seven weeks, players sharpened their skills through twice-weekly rounds at the Carl Dickman Par 3 Course, paired with weekly instructional sessions at Smith Richardson.

The season was packed with great competition, including several spirited intrateam matches under a variety of formats (e.g. scramble, Pinehurst) and across grade groupings. Highlights featured the St. Thomas Invitational, where our golfers squared off against the Fairfield middle school teams, as well as an exciting four-ball match against Fairfield Country Day School.

Still, nothing tops the team favorite—the annual Wildcat Open. This fun-filled event lets players trade seriousness for silliness as they putt

blindfolded, tee off from a Bosu ball, snack on candy, and tackle a series of creative golf challenges that make it the most anticipated day of the season.



CROSS COUNTRY

The Cross Country team participated in two races over the season including the Diocesan Championship, where the boys team won the overall championships thanks to strong performances by **Isaiah Latham** (3rd place), **Jacob Kershner** (4th place), **Thomas McCormick** (3rd place JV), and **Anthony Khoury** (5th place JV).

BEYOND THE BELL

While not officially part of our athletics program, **Beyond the Bell** continues to be one of the most active and engaging parts of student life at St. Thomas. Our after-school program offers a wide range of sports and movement-based activities that keep students energized and involved, including **taekwondo, flag football, baseball, gym games, and many more.**

Alumni – Help Guide Our Next Strategic Plan

St. Thomas is in the middle of developing its 2026-30 Strategic Plan, and we want alumni voices at the center of it. Please take our short survey (under 10 minutes) by scanning the code before January 31st.

We sincerely appreciate your input!



NOTE: Parent Alums we are also seeking your input through focus groups, if you would like to join one, please email board@stasonline.net

SAVE THE DATES

12/21 Alumni Families Holiday Soiree
Seagrape, Fairfield • 5:00-7:00 PM

12/23 Christmas Concert
Harding | Halas Arts & Athletics Center • 8:45 AM

1/26-1/30 Catholic Schools Week

2/17 "For the Love of St. Thomas" Giving Tuesday

4/25 Spring to Auction Event
Black Rock Yacht Club

5/3 Alumni Mass

If you have information to share on a student or alum please email us at info@stasonline.net



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1719 Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

203.255.0556 | FAX: 203.255.0596

 STASONLINE.NET

 [STA Facebook Page](#)

 [STA Instagram Page](#)

 [STA YouTube Page](#)

 [Alumni Contact Information](#)
(Google Forms)