



Academy Alumni Newsletter

For Alumni of The Grosse Pointe Academy and the Academy of the Sacred Heart



A Spring Tradition That Brings the GPA Community Together

As the days grow longer and the first signs of spring appear across our community, we are reminded of the energy and renewal that this season brings. Spring has always been a special time for our school—a time when students, teachers, families, and alumni come together to celebrate the work happening in our classrooms and the spirit that makes our community so strong.

One of the highlights of the season is our annual Action Auction. This event is more than a fundraiser; it is a celebration of the people and programs that shape the student experience every day. My husband, Peter Panagopoulos, and I had the honor to co-chair the Action Auction in 2024 with Olivia and Dominic Paluzzi. Our vision was encouraging our school to “Dream Big” and highlighted our teachers as the honorary chairs. Our teachers are the heart of our school. Their dedication, creativity, and commitment bring learning to life in ways that extend far beyond the classroom. Whether guiding students through new ideas, encouraging

curiosity, or supporting individual growth, they make an extraordinary impact on our community.

Spring is also a time when alumni reconnect with the school that helped shape them. The Action Auction offers a wonderful opportunity to gather, share memories, and support the next generation of students. Every bid, donation, and moment of participation reflects the shared commitment we have to sustaining the vibrant community that continues to grow here at GPA.

Thank you for being part of this community and for supporting the teachers and programs that make our school such a special place!



Erica Frost Panagopoulos '99
Alumni Association President

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THE GROSSE POINTE ACADEMY



- Ages 2.5 Yrs to Grade 8
- Montessori Early School
- Lower School
- Middle School



8:1

STUDENT
TO
TEACHER
RATIO

140

YEAR HISTORY



20

ACRE HISTORIC CAMPUS ON
LAKE ST. CLAIR WITH
CENTURY-OLD ARCHITECTURE

8 ACADEMY CORNERSTONES

EMPATHY	LEADERSHIP
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	INDEPENDENCE
INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY	EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
ACTIVE LISTENING	CRITICAL THINKING



Now Enrolling

2026-2027

ACADEMIC YEAR

Apply today!





Strategic Plan: A Vision for the Future

At The Grosse Pointe Academy, we believe the most meaningful education prepares students not only for academic success, but for lives of purpose, character, and impact. As we look ahead, we are excited to share the direction of our new Strategic Plan: A Vision for the Future – a thoughtful roadmap designed to strengthen our community, enrich the student experience, and ensure GPA continues to thrive for generations to come.

This plan was shaped through collaboration with faculty, staff, parents, trustees, alumni, and community members, all guided by a shared belief in the enduring value of a GPA education. While the world around us continues to evolve, our mission remains rooted in the same principles that have defined the Academy for generations: intellectual curiosity, personal growth, meaningful relationships, joyful learning experiences, and a deep commitment to nurturing the whole child. The Strategic Plan is not simply about growth. It is about preserving what makes GPA exceptional while thoughtfully preparing students for the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Centered around four strategic priorities – People, Learning, Campus, and Resources – the plan provides a framework for investing in exceptional educators, innovative learning experiences, and the long-term sustainability of our school. It reflects a commitment to balancing tradition with purposeful innovation while ensuring students are equipped with the skills, confidence, adaptability, and character needed to navigate an ever-changing world.

Already, we are seeing this vision come to life across campus. This year's implementation of mixed-age classrooms in Grades 1–4 reflects our commitment to developmentally aligned learning rooted in Montessori principles. Across all divisions, students continue to engage in collaborative, hands-on, and experiential learning opportunities that encourage creativity, resilience, communication, leadership, and critical thinking. We are also continuing to explore ways our campus environments, programs, and resources can better support how students learn and grow.

Most importantly, this work is grounded in people. Our faculty and staff remain at the heart of the Academy experience, creating classrooms and relationships where students are deeply known, supported, challenged, and inspired each day. Together, we are building upon GPA's strong foundation while thoughtfully preparing for the future.

Thank you for your continued partnership and belief in The Grosse Pointe Academy. We are excited for all that lies ahead and grateful to continue this journey together as a community.



Tommy Adams
Head of School

58th Annual Action Auction: A Night That Reflected the Strength of Our Community

What an unforgettable evening **Action Auction 2026: Imagination Decides Everything** was for The Grosse Pointe Academy community.

More than a fundraiser, the Action Auction continues to be a celebration of the people, relationships, and shared belief that shape the student experience each day at GPA. This year's event brought together parents, alumni, faculty, grandparents, and friends of the Academy in support of a collective vision for our students and school. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community, the event raised more than **\$650,000** in support of The Grosse Pointe Academy – a powerful reflection of what is possible when a community comes together in support of children and education.

One of the most inspiring moments of the evening came during this year's Paddle Raise, where the GPA community rallied behind a bold vision for the future of learning at the Academy. In an extraordinary display of generosity, more than **\$200,000** was raised to support two transformative initiatives designed to expand how students imagine, create, collaborate, and communicate.

Expanding the STEAM Innovation Hub

Building on the success of GPA's current STEM Lab, the expanded STEAM Innovation Hub will evolve into a dynamic, hands-on environment where students can move from concept to creation through engineering, design, coding, robotics, digital fabrication, and creative exploration.

Planned additions include:

- Expanded robotics and engineering kits
- Advanced fabrication tools and 3D printing supplies
- Coding and digital design platforms
- Laser engravers and heat presses
- Laser t-shirt printer and embroidery machine
- Dedicated Maker's Corner for prototyping and innovation



Equipping the Media & Production Center

The new Benjamin and Christine Fischer Media & Production Center, located in the Main Quad, will provide students with opportunities to communicate, present, and share their ideas through storytelling and digital media.

The space will feature:

- Professional news desk for on-camera reporting
- Dedicated podcast studio
- Collaborative prep and planning space
- Fully equipped video and editing suite



Together, these connected spaces will allow students not only to design, build, and innovate, but also to confidently communicate and showcase their work to the world. The overwhelming support shown during the Paddle Raise reflected the community's shared belief in creating meaningful learning experiences where imagination truly becomes reality.

We are deeply grateful to every donor, sponsor, volunteer, bidder, and attendee who helped bring this event to life. The energy, creativity, and generosity throughout the evening reflected the extraordinary spirit of the GPA community and served as a powerful reminder of what makes this community so special.

With gratitude,



Vida and Timothy Swanson
Michelle and Max Wiener
Action Auction 2026 Chairs

GPA and Academy of Sacred Heart Former Students at 58th Action Auction



Adam Hollerbach (right)



Chairs: Michelle & Max Wiener, Vida & Tim Swanson



Kelly Bayer Kline '98 (left)



Susie Hendrie Rohde '72 (left)



Betsy Conway Haubert '99 (left)



Matthew Louisell '00 (second from right)



Danny French '08 (second from left)



RJ Wolney '93 (left)



Powell Peabody Corbett & Susie Barton Cooper '85



Joe Kaiser '92 (left)



Morgan Westwood '09 (left), Charlie Milligan '08 (right)



Erica Frost Panagopoulos '99 (left)

Congé: A Sacred Heart Tradition Comes to Life



Roselie Bellanca Posselius '73

President of AMASC

The World Association of Alumni of the Sacred Heart



This spring, The Grosse Pointe Academy welcomed students, alumni, parents, and volunteers together for one of the school's most beloved and meaningful traditions – Congé and Alumni History Day.

Rooted in Sacred Heart heritage, a Congé was traditionally a special day of recreation and celebration for students. At GPA, the tradition has evolved into an interactive campus-wide history experience, inviting students to discover the stories, landmarks, and traditions that have shaped the Academy for more than 160 years.

Working in small groups led by alumni and parent volunteers, students traveled throughout campus following clues and uncovering the history behind some of GPA's most treasured spaces. From the Lakeshore Building and Chapel to the Nun's Walk, the Ribbon Farm, Mater Admirabilis, the Porte Cochere, and even "Mr. Reeside's Bench," each stop revealed another layer of the Academy's rich story and Sacred Heart roots.

Along the way, alumni ambassadors shared personal memories and historical reflections that brought the campus to life in a uniquely meaningful way. Students learned how the original Convent of the Sacred Heart operated as a self-sustaining farm, how horse-drawn carriages once arrived at the Porte Cochere, and how generations of Religious of the Sacred Heart shaped the school's spirit of faith, scholarship, and community. They also discovered how many of the traditions and values that define GPA today continue to connect directly to its earliest beginnings.

The experience concluded with another cherished Sacred Heart tradition – the goûter, a surprise afternoon treat shared together in celebration of the day's journey and discoveries.

More than a scavenger hunt, Congé serves as a powerful reminder that the Academy's history is not confined to photographs or archives. It lives within the hallways, trees, chapel, traditions, and stories passed from one generation to the next. For alumni returning to campus, it is an opportunity to reconnect with memories and share them with today's students. For students, it is a chance to better understand the community they are now part of and the legacy they will one day carry forward.

As GPA continues to evolve, traditions like Congé remind us that the strength of our community is rooted not only in where we are going, but also in remembering where we began.



Congé

A formal or authoritative decision to depart. An abrupt dismissal. Taking a leave. A day of celebration for the entire school.
An Academy of the Sacred Heart tradition passed on to The Grosse Pointe Academy.



Chapel History



School Cornerstone



Auditorium, Now The Fisher Library



Pillars and Heart Entrance Way



Crucifix



Dandelion Days



Cafeteria



Congé Opening Remarks at Chapel



Students watching "Then & Now"



Nun's Walk



Barn / Orchard Farm / Chicken Coop



The Boardroom

Exploring the History of GPA on Congé Day 2026

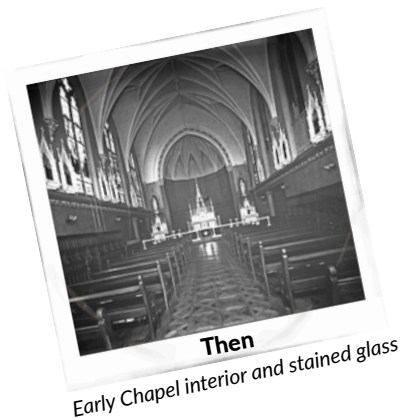
The Porte Cochere

For generations, students and visitors arrived at GPA through the Porte Cochere – French for “a porch large enough for a carriage to pass through.” Horse-drawn carriages once entered through the main gates on Lake Shore Road and pulled beneath the covered entrance. The space later became the gallery of resident artist Virginia Durbin Thibodeau, whose studio remained there until 2006.



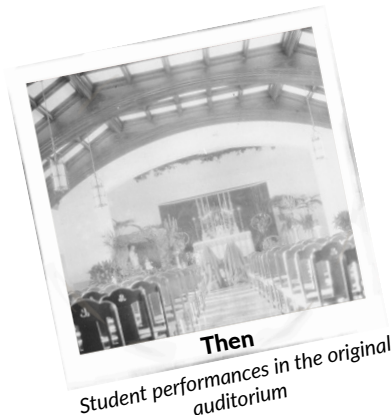
The Chapel

Built in 1899 and inspired by French Gothic architecture, GPA's Chapel remains one of the most treasured spaces on campus. Its stained glass windows, crafted in Munich, Germany, depict the life of Christ and were donated beginning in 1906. For generations of students and alumni, the Chapel has served as a place of prayer, reflection, and community.



The Auditorium

For decades, GPA's original auditorium served as the center of student performances, assemblies, and community gatherings. In 2004, the former auditorium was thoughtfully transformed into today's Fisher Library. Original architectural details – including the barrel-vaulted ceiling, wood arches, paneling, and historic trim – were carefully restored, creating one of the most distinctive and beloved learning spaces on campus.



The Nun's Walk

The “Nun's Walk” was once a tree-lined pathway where the Religious of the Sacred Heart walked daily while praying together. Stretching toward Ridge Road, the path remains a quiet reminder of the school's Sacred Heart roots and the generations who have walked the same grounds before today's students.





Congratulations Class of 2026



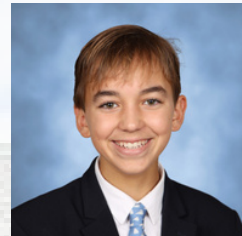
Dara Anifowoshe



Jane Brennan



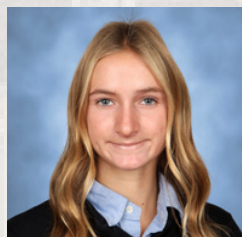
Lailah Byrd



Crew Corbett



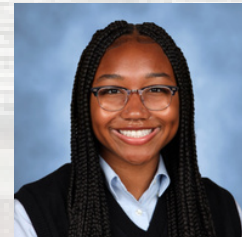
Audrey Darke



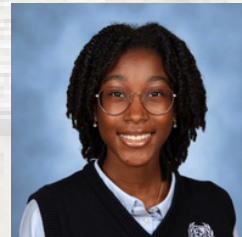
Isabelle Elley



Avery Miller



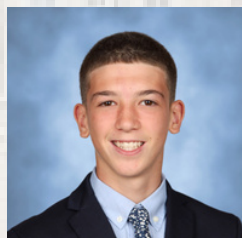
Ajumoke Osiah



Nyla Polk



Nicolas Provenzano



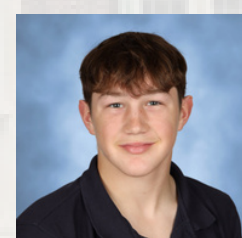
Korver Richards



Sloane Shurafa



Estella Tabaczuk



Julian Wade



Isabella Zuk

We are proud to share that The Grosse Pointe Academy Class of 2026 will be attending the following high schools: Cass Technical High School, Grosse Pointe South High School, Mercy High School, and University Liggett School.

Alumni Spotlight: Betsy Conway Haubert '99 – From GPA Student to Global Business Leader and Academy Parent

For Betsy Conway Haubert '99, The Grosse Pointe Academy is both a treasured memory and a present-day reality. After living in Washington, D.C., Chicago, the United Kingdom, and the San Francisco Bay Area, Betsy and her husband decided they wanted their children to grow up surrounded by family and close community, with a deep sense of belonging.

After touring several schools in the Grosse Pointes, they knew the Academy was the best place for their family. Today, as the parent of Libby and Jack, Betsy sees the same school she loved through a new lens — one that continues to nurture, challenge, and inspire.

Q&A with Betsy Conway Haubert '99

Q: What is it like being an Academy parent after once being a student? What feels the same and what feels different?

A: At its core, the Academy is still very much the same place now for my kids as it was for me. Their teachers are the best and know Libby and Jack so well, and love them for who they are — quirks and all. I love seeing how motivated and excited my kids are to learn here.

I have such happy memories — starting in Early School with Mrs. Carson and going through eighth grade in the “Big School”. I loved my teachers, my friends and their families, and especially the trips with Mr. Fultz. Each trip was different and perfect for the age we were — and each pushed us and taught us we could do hard things.

Q: Can you share your path after GPA and what led you into business and digital technology?

A: After the Academy, I went to Grosse Pointe South and then the University of Richmond, graduating with a BS in Business Administration with concentrations in Marketing and Leadership. I've spent almost twenty years working in digital, primarily in hospitality.

I started in the agency world in D.C. and Chicago, where I learned product development, account management, leadership, and how to be creative and resilient. I've been with Marriott International for nine years. For the past five years, I've led Global Business Development and Customer Engagement for Marriott Digital Services, supporting about 4,500 hotels. I love that digital and technology constantly change, allowing me to grow into different roles over time.

Q: What career advice would you give students today?

A: Take on the hard work — work that maybe others don't want or don't think will work. It will give you a great challenge, and when you can solve it and figure it out, it will feel that much better. My parents and grandparents have been so supportive. My dad gives direct, practical advice. My mom gives personal advice. From my grandparents, I learned how to influence people — with politeness, with assertiveness, and with curiosity about whatever is going on around you.

Q: What memories of your time at the Academy stand out most?

A: Undefeated volleyball — ten years undefeated! It wasn't just that we were good; it was the structure. We had sponsor players who worked with us one-on-one on skills, tracked stats so we could improve, and celebrated wins together.

The leaf project stands out too. We learned about Michigan's natural plants and trees and how to identify and classify them. It taught me respect for our environment and appreciation for the beauty around us.

The outdoor adventures were hard, and that is what made them great. Planning food for two weeks of backpacking, packing everything in and out, cooking over a propane stove, enduring mountain thunderstorms — it was the best sense of accomplishment.

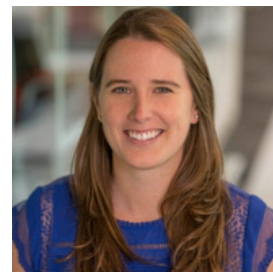
Q: How do you stay connected to GPA today?

A: My parents were very involved — my dad served on the Board as Treasurer, and my mom was a Room Parent and chaired the Auction — and I knew I wanted to get involved too. I've been a Room Parent for the last few years and this year began supporting the school's marketing & enrollment efforts as a committee member.

THEN



AND NOW



EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science in
Business Administration,
Marketing & Leadership**
University of Richmond

PROFESSION

**Global Business
Development & Customer
Engagement Leader**
Marriott Digital Services

OUTSIDE OF WORK

I love being outdoors with my family — boating, fishing, skiing, and pickleball. This spring I'm teaching Jack to ride a two-wheeler, and this summer I hope to get both kids to jump from the high(er) dive.

GPA MEMORIES

“Each trip was different and perfect for the age we were — each pushed us and taught us we could do hard things.”

– Betsy Conway Haubert '99

Where Are They Now?

From GPA Graduate to Lifetime Milestones — A Journey of Growth and Achievement



Dr. Zewditu Asfaw '93

High School: Detroit Country Day School '97

College: Duke University, Wake Forest University

Profession: Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Beyond Podiatry



Jamie Brock '89

High School: University Liggett School '89

College: Wittenberg University

Profession: President, Harvest Oak Manufacturing



Dr. Melanie Lewis Darke '92

High School: Grosse Pointe South '96

College: Georgetown University, Wayne State University School of Medicine

Profession: Anesthesiologist, Henry Ford St. John Hospital



RJ Wolney '93

High School: Grosse Pointe South '97

College: University of Notre Dame, Northwestern University

Profession: Executive Vice President, Principal, ELIA Group



Recent Happenings at The Grosse Pointe Academy



Art Show 2026



Poetry Slam
Grades 1 and 2



Detroit Historical Museum
Grade 6 Field Trip



Third Man Records Field Trip
Financial Literacy Elective



Son Pickleball
All Star Night



Daughter Dance
A Night to Shine



Folk Tails
Grades 3 and 4 Performance



GPA Moms
Pure Barre Class



Amazing Shake
Top 5 Finalists at Ford Field



Zekelman Holocaust Center
Middle School Field Trip



58th Annual Action Auction



GPA Bulldog Bash
Let's Glow!



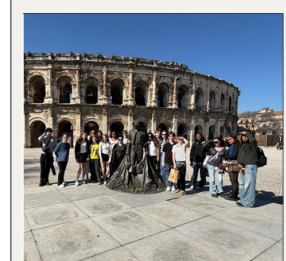
Volcano Eruption
Fifth Grade Project



Michigan Court of Appeals
Mock Trial



Detroit Zoo Field Trip
Grades 1 and 2



Middle School Europe Trip
France and Spain

Academy Alumni Association Scholarship

Dear GPA Class of 2023,

As alumni of The Grosse Pointe Academy, you are uniquely qualified to recognize the quality of the education you received at GPA. You have your own voices and unique stories to tell about your days here as students. Because of this, The Grosse Pointe Academy Alumni Association invites you to participate in the Academy Advantage Alumni Scholarship Award! This opportunity is offered to all current high school seniors who graduated from the Academy in 2023. Your participation could result in an award of **\$1,000** payable to the college of your choice.

As you finish high school, I am sure that you have had some time to reflect upon your time at GPA.

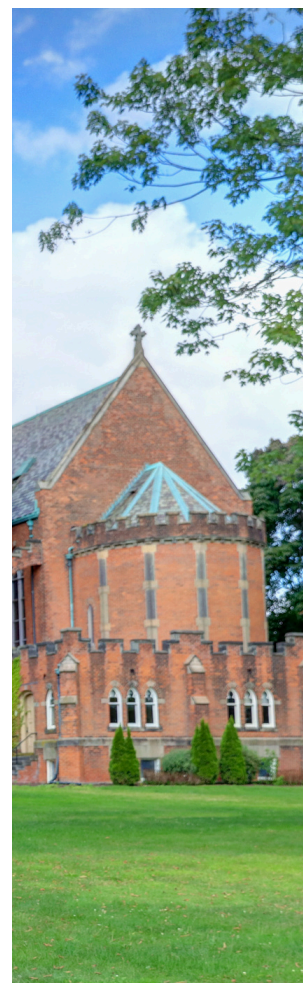
To be considered for the scholarship, the applicants must write a 500-word essay on the following topic: **"The Value of the Academy Experience and How it Changed my Life."** Your anonymous essays will be reviewed by members of the alumni board to select the one which best reflects the theme. The deadline is Friday, April 15, 2027 and the award will be presented to the recipient at The Grosse Pointe Academy's 8th grade graduation in June.

Please fill out the application and return it either electronically to maohart@msn.com or mail it to the Academy with your essay by **April 15, 2027**.

The Grosse Pointe Academy | Attn: Mary Alice Mecke | 171 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236 | via email to maohart@msn.com

We look forward to your participation.

Erica Frost Panagopoulos '99
Alumni Association President



The Grosse Pointe Academy Alumni Association Application for Academy Alumni Scholarship (Eligible Candidates: GPA Class of 2023)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I am applying for The Grosse Pointe Academy Alumni Association Scholarship.

Signature _____

Email to maohart@msn.com | Mail to 171 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236



Alumni Board '25-'26

Mary Jo Johnson
 Patricia Eldredge Kolojeski '62
 Elizabeth Frost LaRiviere '01
 Molly Oldani McDermott '58
 Mary Alice O'Brien Mecke '74
 Muffy Boomer Milligan '73
 Erica Frost Panagopoulos '99
 Roselie Bellanca Posselius '73
 Morgan Westwood '09
 Debby Wolney



Board of Trustees '25-'26

President: Paul Lindow
Vice-President: Edward (Ted) McDermott, Jr.
Treasurer: Adam Hollerbach
Secretary: RJ Wolney
Head of School: Tommy Adams
Member at Large: Devin Ezop
Trustees: Mason Colman, Powell Corbett,
 Heather Edwards, Rian English, Stacey Haas,
 Joseph Kaiser V, Frank Kuplicki, T. Hart
 Mecke III, Ellsworth Miller, Bob Moesta, Erica
 Panagopoulos, Roselie Bellanca Posselius

Recent and Upcoming Alumni Events

Kindergarten Celebration

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

The Grosse Pointe Academy Baccalaureate

Thursday, June 4, 2026

The Grosse Pointe Academy Graduation

Friday, June 5, 2026

Grosse Pointe Santa Claus Parade

Friday, November 24, 2026 10:00 AM

Christmas Eve Alumni Mass

Thursday, December 24, 2026 4:00 PM

Action Auction 2027

Saturday, May 8, 2027 5:30 PM



*Help nurture, challenge, and
 inspire students to be architects
 and builders of the future!*

DONATE TODAY
gpacademy.org/give-now





THE GROSSE POINTE ACADEMY

2026 SUMMER CAMPS



JUNE TO AUGUST

We're offering a blend of learning, new experiences, and pure fun!

**OVER 50 FULL DAY AND
HALF DAY CAMPS**

**ARTS, ATHLETICS,
MUSIC, STEM, TRAVEL**

PARTNERSHIPS

- CAMP INVENTION
- COLLEGE OF CREATIVE STUDIES
- COURT 4 DETROIT
- GP LAKERS

Themed weekly day camps packed with creativity, friendship, and hands-on fun in a caring, and welcoming environment.

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