Villa Joseph Marie

MAGAZINE



Led by legacy

How we are building on our mission for generations to come

Learning is the teacher

Today's Villa students are learning by doing, leading, and engaging

A new tradition takes root

One community. Four Emblems. A stronger sisterhood.

FALL 2026





Chloe Gumbs ’27 and Katherine Myers ’27 become problem-solvers through Villa’s Robotics Club. Villa students put their STEM skills into action, developing creativity, collaboration, and confidence as they design, build, and compete.

VILLA JOSEPH MARIE HIGH SCHOOL

Administration and Staff

President
Jeanne Frawley '94

Chief Financial Officer
Roger Messina

Principal
Valerie Prucnal

Assistant Principal
Paula Soley

Chief Marketing Officer
Tricia Barger

Director of Admission
Maureen Mathis

Director of Advancement
Matt Grunwell

Director of Counseling
Linda Smith

Director of Mission and Ministry
Grace Scarpello '12

Director of Facilities
Andrew Hess

Athletic Director
Amy Barr

Business Manager
Lynda Harkrader

Communications Manager
Rachel Fox

Alumnae Relations Manager
Cathleen Murway

Advancement Associate, EITC Coordinator
Alyse Johnson

Contributors

Andrea Abrams '27
Madison Chiolan '22
Rachel Fox

Design

Tricia Barger

On the cover: Villa students gather in the Student Lounge.

Mission

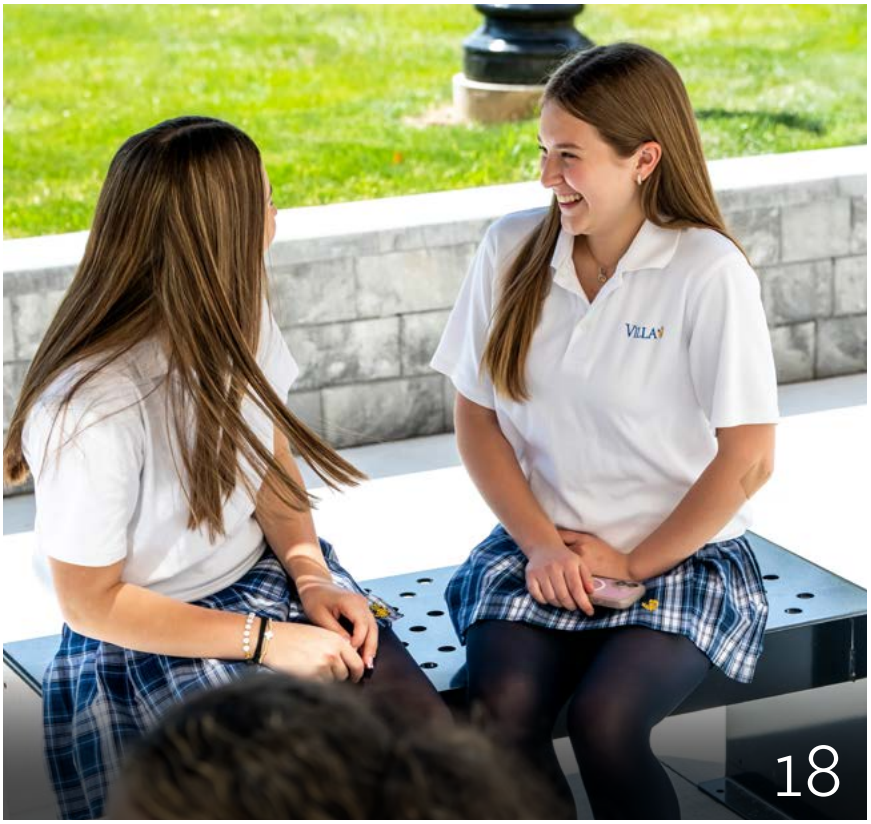
Villa Joseph Marie High School, a Catholic college-preparatory high school, empowers young women through faith, education, and service in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Casimir.

Vision

Villa creates an academically challenging environment within a nurturing community, helping young women discern who they are and who God calls them to be.

Inspired by the words of Mother Maria Kaupas, we work in the spirit of "always more, always better, always with love."

Table of **Contents**


18


14


24

18 Forward to our future

Campus improvements, professional growth, and expanded opportunities strengthen Villa's mission and enhance the student experience.

Features

14
Learning without walls

Villa students are learning beyond the classroom through hands-on experiences, collaboration, leadership, and real-world opportunities.

24
A new tradition begins

A new program is strengthening Villa's sisterhood through mentorship, leadership, service, and community across grade levels.

Departments

4 Highlights
10 Faculty and Staff
26 Athletics
28 Alumnae News
29 Class Notes
36 Legacy



Villa is on the move as we enter our 95th school year. You'll sense in the coming pages the excitement on campus. Rooted in who we are, with Mother Maria's entrepreneurial spirit alive and well, our progress in academics, facilities, and community partnerships is improving the student experience. As we take a moment to reflect on several wins and advances, I hope you'll join us in gratitude and joy.

Villa's momentum continues. The welcoming back of old friends and the addition of new faces all feed our trajectory.

Grounded in mission, we continue to grow. Through camps and school visits, we've breathed new life into welcoming future Jems to campus, and for our current students, we've expanded leadership opportunities to build differentiated skills for the demands of the world.

For the first time, our internship program expanded to facilities, while we kept opportunities in enrollment and marketing. Six students spent their summers in Villa internships, four of whom had a direct influence on our gym refurbishment.

I am heartened to share this growth with you and to see the Villa spirit launch beyond our walls. Our alumnae are lifting one another up through internship opportunities and post-college employment. Villa continues to be a place where women help women.

It is an honor to work alongside our Sisters, Board, administration, faculty, staff, students, families, and community leadership to implement Villa's Strategic Plan. We truly are moving forward to a brighter future, and we thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



President
Villa Joseph Marie High School

Celebrating **Merit Scholarship** Success

The Class of 2026 earned more than $15.3 million in merit scholarships from colleges and universities across the country, an extraordinary average of $235,000 per student. While these scholarships recognize academic excellence, they also celebrate the leadership, service, and character that define a Villa education.

The Mother Maria Kaupas Scholarship, established by the Villa Joseph Marie Class of 1960, honors students who embody the vision of our foundress through leadership, advocacy, and a commitment to creating positive change. This scholarship provides one-time $1,000 tuition awards to four Villa students—one rising freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior—who are passionate advocates and activists for positive change in the areas of social justice, environment, science, medicine, engineering, arts, literature, or culture. This year's recipients are **Brenna O'Shea '27**, **Aubree Kuvik '28**, **Liliana Cacchio '29**, and **Stephanie Milewski '30**.

The Kaitlin Abel Memorial Scholarship, created in memory of Kaitlin Abel '09, recognizes a rising junior and rising senior who have demonstrated kindness toward others, strong academic focus and work ethic, involvement in extracurricular activities, a commitment to community service, and values friendship and assisting others, often behind the scenes. This scholarship provides two annual scholarships of $2,500 each. This year's recipients are **Lucy Jasionis '27** and **Gianna Na '28**.

The Amy Canning Koehler Scholarship honors a rising senior whose kindness, compassion, thoughtfulness, generosity, graciousness, and love of fun reflect the legacy of Villa parent Amy Canning Koehler. The annual award is $2,500. This year's recipient is **Mary Hamme '27**.



Left to right: Liliana Cacchio '29, Aubree Kuvik '28, and Brenna O'Shea '27

UNITING VILLA THROUGH THE EMBLEM PROGRAM

This year marked the launch of an exciting new Villa tradition. Led by Student Council, the Emblem Program is a peer mentorship and community-building initiative designed to foster leadership, sisterhood, and a deep connection to the mission and values of the Sisters of St. Casimir.

Each of the four emblems—Crown, Jem, Lily, and Sword—drew students from every grade level as well as faculty and staff, intentionally weaving the entire Villa community together.

Read more about the Emblem Program on page 24.

Villa Launches Inaugural ELA Extravaganza



This spring, Villa's National English Honor Society turned a creative idea into an exciting new tradition with the inaugural ELA Extravaganza.

Inspired by former National English Honor Society (NEHS) President Isabelle DaSilva '25, who envisioned an English language arts counterpart to Sciathalon, the current executive board brought the event to life under the leadership of President Angela Sigmund '26. Building on the school's spelling bee, students reimagined the experience into an engaging celebration of literature, language, and teamwork.

Welcoming sixth- and seventh-grade students from six neighboring schools, the ELA Extravaganza featured poetry slams, literature charades, book trivia, and, of course, the traditional spelling bee. Every aspect of the event—from planning and organization to hosting the day's activities—was designed and led by Villa's NEHS members.

Participating schools included Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Saint Andrew School, St. Ignatius of Antioch, Nativity of Our Lord, and Queen of Angels.

More than a competition, the ELA Extravaganza celebrated the joy of learning and the confidence that comes from sharing one's talents with others. Through their creativity, leadership, and service, Villa's NEHS members created an experience that inspired younger students while strengthening connections within the broader school community.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Women in STEM



Last fall, Villa Joseph Marie proudly hosted its 36th Annual Sciathlon, welcoming teams of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade girls from area schools for a morning of collaboration, creativity, and scientific discovery.

A longstanding Villa tradition, Sciathlon invites young women to explore STEM in an encouraging environment where curiosity is celebrated and confidence grows. Working in teams, participants tackled hands-on challenges that tested their problem-solving skills, teamwork, and ingenuity—from coding robots and engineering model cars to solving science and math challenges. The morning concluded with the Science Quizzo, where teams put their knowledge and quick thinking to the test.

More than a competition, Sciathlon offers middle school girls a glimpse into the innovative, supportive learning experiences that define a Villa education. Year after year, the event inspires young women to embrace new challenges, discover their strengths, and imagine the possibilities that await them in STEM.



Hope-A-Thon Brings Villa Together

Villa's annual Hope-A-Thon took place in April and brought students, faculty, and the community together for a day of dancing, service, and fundraising in support of the Think Hope Foundation. Organized by Villa students, the eight-hour event featured choreographed dances at the top of each hour, guest speakers, class competitions, games, food, and fundraising challenges.

Student event chairs and their classmates spent months preparing for the event by partnering with local businesses, hosting fundraisers, including a pickleball tournament, and building excitement across campus.

During the event, students participated in activities including the Dare Wall, "trapping" teachers through donations, Hungry Hippo, and other challenges.

Through the generosity of students, families, and community partners, Villa raised $61,795 to honor the memory of Villa alumna Maria Middleton '21, while celebrating a day centered on compassion, service, and school spirit. Members of the Middleton family also joined students to share their story and connect the day's efforts to the Think Hope Foundation's mission.



BUILDING UPDATES

Excited Villa students welcomed **brand-new art desks** into their classroom this past school year, thanks to the generosity of our Giving Tuesday donors. For three years in a row, Villa has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Art Education Association (PAEA) as an Outstanding Visual Arts Community.

Villa's **front lobby** has a beautiful new look thanks to the students in the Honors Transformative Leadership course, led by theology teacher Stephanie Weaver. Made possible by this year's Annual Fund, the new furniture creates a warm, welcoming space for students, families, and visitors. This project reflects the leadership, collaboration, and sisterhood that make Villa so special.

Summer Programs Inspire **Exploration and Growth**







Villa Joseph Marie's summer programs welcomed 243 campers for a season of learning, creativity, and discovery. Through academic, arts, leadership, and athletic offerings, campers explored new interests, developed skills, and built connections with peers across the region.

New offerings this summer expanded opportunities for students, including Young Entrepreneurs: Launch Your Babysitting Business, where participants gained confidence in working with children and were certified by the Red Cross in CPR and babysitting. Additional programs included creative writing, art intensives, high school placement testing preparation, and hands-on academic experiences.

The Fine Arts Department's Summer Stage brought the world of Dr. Seuss to life through *Seussical Jr.* during a three-week Drama Camp experience led by Fine Arts Department Chair Melissa Holdren. Campers developed skills in acting, singing, and stagecraft before sharing their work with family and friends during two magical nights of performances.

Villa rowing celebrated its eleventh summer on Lake Luxembourg, continuing a tradition of excellence that has prepared student-athletes for national competition and collegiate rowing opportunities.

The Athletics Department, under the direction of Athletic Director Amy Barr, coordinated camps for basketball, softball, soccer, and volleyball. Every athletic camp increased in attendance over last year, demonstrating the strength of our athletic programs and the coaches who lead the teams.

Villa's summer programs continue to provide students with opportunities to learn, create, and grow beyond the traditional school year. Registration for Summer@Villa 2027 will be available in January.

Inaugural **Casimir Dinner** Raises $87,000 for Scholarships







Villa Joseph Marie hosted its inaugural Casimir Dinner at Union League Golf Club at Torresdale in April, bringing together supporters, families, and members of the Villa community to raise funds for student scholarships. The event generated more than $87,000 in scholarship support.

The evening included a cocktail reception, silent auction, live auction, Golden Ticket raffle, special prizes, and a dessert dash. Guests also heard remarks from Villa Joseph Marie High School President Jeanne Frawley ’94, a reflection from Sr. Immacula, and a student perspective from Maura Lynch ’29. The Villa Joseph Marie Choir provided musical performances throughout the evening, and the event concluded with a closing prayer.





Members of the Sisters of St. Casimir and the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) of Scranton joined the celebration, highlighting the shared mission and legacy that continue to shape Villa’s commitment to educating young women.





Funds raised from the event will support scholarships, helping make a Villa education accessible to students and strengthening the school’s mission for future generations.



VILLA DADS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

A special shout-out to the Villa dads with the Fathers' Guild who volunteered their time and talent to paint the hallways in the lower level of Saint Joseph's Wing, near the Transcend and Robotics rooms. Their hard work has given this part of our school a fresh new look.

Power teams of dads and daughters made 500 peanut butter and jelly lunch bags and 500 snack bags for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen—TASK—during the Father-Daughter Day of Service. Thanks to the Parents' Guild for organizing this event.

CAMPUS DAY OF SERVICE

In February, Villa students participated in the annual Campus Day of Service, supporting local organizations through a variety of service projects. Freshmen and sophomores completed projects on campus, including cleaning the chapel, preparing the Pop-Up Shop, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for Mother of Mercy House in Kensington, and assembling care packets.

Juniors and seniors served at community partner locations, including Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Academy, Caring for Friends, and Redeemer Valley Farm. Students helped care for therapy horses, prepared meals and food packages for homebound individuals, wrote notes to recipients, and assisted with farm projects and daily operations.

Students also partnered with A Woman's Place to assemble approximately 200 court care kits for individuals seeking Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders in Bucks County. The kits included items such as notebooks, pens, snacks, water, and stress-relief tools to provide support during court proceedings. Through these service projects, students addressed community needs while gaining a deeper understanding of the organizations and individuals they served.



New Faces



Tricia Barger

MARKETING

Tricia joined Villa in June as chief marketing officer, bringing more than 25 years of experience in communications, design, and project management for Catholic education. She earned her B.A. in English and communication and her M.S. in education from the University of Dayton.



Sara Bernal

SCIENCE

Sara brings experience teaching both physical and life sciences, including chemistry, biology, and environmental science. Sara earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago and master's degrees from Rutgers University and Temple University.



Sharon Dougherty

HUMAN RESOURCES

Sharon joined Villa as the human resources generalist in July. She brings more than 40 years of HR experience, having served as director of human resources at Chestnut Hill College and compensation specialist at Redeemer Health. A graduate of Holy Family University, she holds a Bachelor of Arts in psychology for business.



Mary Beth Flatley P'24

THEOLOGY

Mary Beth brings experience as a theology teacher and religion curriculum coordinator, having most recently taught at St. Katharine Drexel School. She earned her Master of Education from Holy Family University and her Bachelor of Economics from Saint Mary's College. She will teach Senior Theology, God in All Things, and Entrepreneurship.



Michele Gordon

THEOLOGY

Michele has spent much of her career teaching theology in Catholic girls' schools. She most recently served as director of religious education at Saint Alphonsus Church. Michele earned her bachelor's degree at The Catholic University of America and her master's degree from Fordham University.



Anne Keegan

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Anne joins Villa as a project manager, helping coordinate the Business Ethics Case Study Competition. Anne brings a strong background in organization and event planning, having previously served as office operations manager at Wistex and catering events manager at Aramark.



Maggie Wade '19

DEVELOPMENT

Maggie returned to Villa last fall as the development data analyst, a new role. Following her education at Villa, Maggie earned a Bachelor of Science in applied statistics from Purdue University and a Master of Science in data science from Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis.

FAREWELLS

After eight years as a theology teacher at Villa, **Will Dennis** will pursue his passion through his business Unscripted Productions, an improv studio built on creativity and connection. Will made a lasting impact during his time with Villa, from supporting meaningful professional development experiences to helping facilitate retreats that have deepened our sense of mission and connection.

As the Assistant Director of Admissions, **Annie Fowler** supported the day-to-day operations of the admissions office and was instrumental in the success of the Summer Camps. She also gave her time moderating the Diamond Key Club. We're grateful for the impact Annie left on the Villa community.

Amy Shatto is leaving Villa Joseph Marie after three years as a theology teacher and Pro-Life Club moderator. She helped students explore their faith, the teachings of the Church, and their role in serving others. We appreciate Amy's dedication to our students.

After 42 years of teaching chemistry—including the past seven years at Villa—**Joe Sheenan** retired at the close of the 2025–2026 school year. Joe taught Honors and AP Chemistry, helped launch instruction in the school's new chemistry lab, and made a lasting impact on generations of Jems through his passion for science and commitment to student success.

Faculty in Focus



John Gentile; Rachel Heuckroth

Villa faculty continued to expand their expertise through specialized professional development opportunities that strengthen classroom instruction and student learning.

John Gentile participated in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) professional development for Principles of Engineering and Principles of Artificial Intelligence, gaining new strategies to guide students through hands-on exploration of engineering concepts, automation, and the applications and ethics of AI.

Stacie Stoops and **Eileen Cunningham** completed Advanced Placement Summer Institutes for AP Statistics and AP Psychology, respectively. These intensive programs provide AP educators with updated course knowledge, instructional strategies, and resources to prepare students for the challenges of AP coursework.

Three faculty members were also selected as College Board AP Exam Readers: **Carol Wastog** for AP Calculus AB, **Rachel Heuckroth** for AP English Literature and Composition, and **Katlyn DiGiuseppe** for AP Seminar. This distinction recognizes experienced AP educators who help evaluate student exams nationwide while gaining valuable insight into AP standards and student success.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2026

As the Class of 2026 reaches this milestone, we celebrate a remarkable group of young women who have embraced every opportunity to learn, lead, and serve. Their talents, friendships, and school spirit have shaped the Villa community. We proudly celebrate their accomplishments and wish them all the best in their next chapter.



Valedictorian
Katherine Phillips

Salutatorian
Catherine Gallagher

Archdiocesan Academic Honors Convocation Honorees
Catherine Gallagher, Katherine Phillips

Venerable Servant of God Maria Kaupas Award for Exemplifying the Mission of Villa Joseph Marie High School
Julianna Warshaw

Sisters of St. Casimir Award
Danielle Carradorini

Father Sirvaitis Award for Outstanding Display of Catholic Values
Eveleen McGinley

J.E.M. Community Service Award
Ruby Chen

Villa's Awards For Excellence
Always More: Madeline Heine
Always Better: Kara Whalen
Always With Love: Catherine Holt
Always Villa: Madelyn Smith

Award for Outstanding School Leadership
Gabriella Deeley, Julia Grunwell, Molly Marr, Madelyn Smith

Villa Joseph Marie Faculty Award
Gianna Giordano

Diamond Key Student Ambassador Award
Julianna Warshaw

Good Citizenship Awards
Christina Adamov, Gianna Aguilar, Madeline Andrusiewicz, Francesca Avallone, Jacquelyn Capasso, Danielle Carradorini, Peyton Dailey, Victoria Danker, Gabriella Deeley, Caleigh Donohue, Maura Doughty, Olivia Elridge, Katherine Farrell, Gianna Giordano, Grace Holdren, Catherine Holt, Taylor Houtz, Jenna Ibrahim, Casey Kent, Eveleen McGinley, Adelaide Niemczak, Kayleigh O'Shea, Katelyn White

Diocesan Scholars 2025-2026
Paige Halligan, Addison Holmes, Jenna Ibrahim, Emma Sosna, Julianna Warshaw

The Presidential Award for Educational Excellence (Gold Medal Awards)
Megan Blake, Danielle Carradorini, Ruby Chen, Gabriella Cherian, Catherine Gallagher, Ciara Gibbons, Julia Grunwell, Paige Halligan, Addison Holmes, Hailey Keaveney, Mairead Menarde, Katherine Phillips, Angela Sigmund, Madelyn Smith, Emma Sosna

2025-2026 Courier-Kiwanis Student Athlete Award
Madeline Heine

Class of 2026 Alumnae Class Agent
Julia Grunwell, Madelyn Smith

Many members of the Class of 2026 also received subject-specific honors and participation awards recognizing their accomplishments in activities and athletics.

THE JOURNEY AHEAD:
COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

American University
Appalachian State University
Arcadia University
Auburn University
Boston College
Bowling Green State University
Chestnut Hill College
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
College of Charleston
Connecticut College
Delaware Valley University
DePaul University
DeSales University
Drew University
Drexel University
Duquesne University
Elizabethtown College
Emory and Henry University
Fairfield University
Flagler College
Florida Institute of Technology
Fordham University
Fordham University at Rose Hill
Franklin and Marshall College
Furman University
Gettysburg College
Gwynedd Mercy University
Haverford College
High Point University
Hofstra University
Holy Family University
Immaculata University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Iowa State University of Science and Technology
Ithaca College
James Madison University
John Carroll University
Johnson and Wales University
King's College
Kutztown University
Lafayette College
LaSalle University
Lehigh University
Louisiana State University
Loyola University Chicago
Loyola University Maryland
Lycoming College
Lynn University
Marquette University
Mercyhurst University
Michigan State University
Millersville University
Monmouth University
Moravian University
Muhlenberg College
North Carolina State University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Nova Southeastern University
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Penn State University – Scranton
Penn State University – University Park
Providence College
Purdue University
Quinnipiac University
Rider University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rollins College
Rowan University
Rutgers University
Sacred Heart University
Saint Francis University
Saint Joseph's University
Saint Leo University
Santa Clara University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Seton Hall University
Smith College
Stevens Institute of Technology
Stockton University
Stonehill College
Stony Brook University
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University
Temple University
The Catholic University of America
The College of New Jersey
The George Washington University
The University of Scranton
The University of Tampa
Thomas Jefferson University
Union College
University of Alabama
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign
University of Kentucky
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
University of Massachusetts – Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Mississippi
University of New Haven
University of Notre Dame
University of Pittsburgh
University of Pittsburgh – Bradford
University of Rhode Island
University of San Francisco
University of South Carolina
University of South Carolina – Beaufort
University of South Carolina – Columbia
University of Tennessee
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin – Madison
Ursinus College
Villanova University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Wentworth Institute of Technology
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
West Virginia University
Widener University
Xavier University

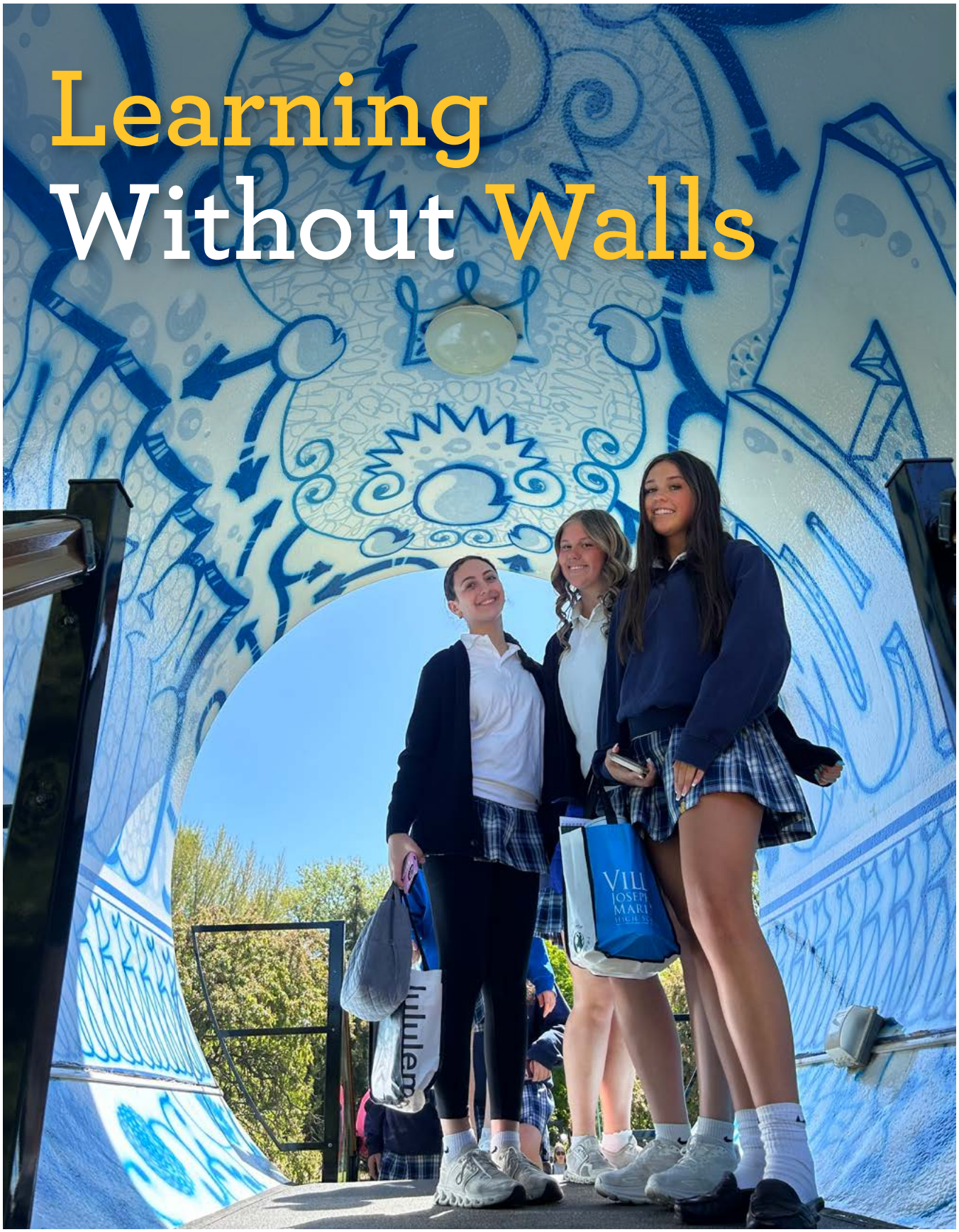
Graduates from the Class of 2026 are attending the schools in bold type.







Learning Without Walls



Villa students visit the Grounds for Sculpture

Learning comes to life beyond the classroom for Villa's Jems

—MADISON CHIOLAN '22

At Villa Joseph Marie, learning happens beyond the textbooks and traditional classroom walls because some of the most meaningful lessons don't start at a desk. Students have opportunities to apply their knowledge, collaborate with peers, and engage with the world around them through hands-on projects, competitions, field experiences, collaborative programs, and leadership opportunities. This setup encourages the girls to do more than learn the concepts. They experience them.

Villa is committed to experiential, collaborative, and whole-person education. While the classroom is the heart of learning, experiential learning offers opportunities to put classroom knowledge into practice in real-world settings.

"Some of the most meaningful learning happens when students are asked to solve authentic problems, collaborate with others, and reflect on the process, not just the outcome," said Assistant Principal Paula Soley.

Designed learning experiences

Villa's academic experiences reflect that philosophy.

In Villa's Project Lead the Way courses, students tackle engineering and biomedical challenges with project-based learning. They design, build, test, revise, and present solutions while working collaboratively. Students go beyond simply studying by building resilience and communication skills while fostering creativity through hands-on application, iteration, and learning.

Students can also step into a new role: creating learning experiences for others. During Sciathalon, Jems work alongside science teachers to design and facilitate an interactive science competition for younger students across the region. They create challenges, test activities, coordinate logistics, and serve as mentors.



Villa students visit the Philadelphia Museum of Art

Similarly, ELA Extravaganza allows students to help create and facilitate a literature-focused event for younger students. Working alongside ELA teachers, girls strengthen their creativity, communication, collaboration, and leadership skills while inspiring the next generation of leaders.

Beyond the campus

Experiential learning takes students beyond Villa's campus. Girls get many opportunities throughout the year to experience culture. Visits to the Grounds for Sculpture and the Museum of the American Revolution connect students with art and immerse them in history. From Spanish class visits to local dance instruction to AP Latin's exploration of ancient cultures at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology—often called the Penn Museum—young women are experiencing culture and exposure to a wider community.

Experiences like these put Villa students in settings where they can see, experience, question, and most importantly, engage with ideas authentically.

Leadership and real-world decision-making are central to this type of experiential learning. Now in its third year, Villa's Business Ethics Case Study Competition brings students from area high schools together to analyze complex ethical challenges and develop solutions to real-world dilemmas they may encounter in the workplace. Through the competition, students gain valuable experience tackling the kinds of ethical decisions and challenges that business leaders face every day. *(Learn more on page 16.)*

Across campus, experiential learning takes many forms. From robotics, student retreats, and service opportunities to guest speakers, academic competitions, student-led

organizations, college and career programming, and field experiences, Villa continues to expand learning beyond the traditional classroom. Each of these opportunities reinforces the idea that education is not confined to a single subject, lesson, or classroom. Instead, meaningful learning happens when students are given opportunities to explore, engage, collaborate, and apply their knowledge in real-world settings.

A new approach

Villa's commitment to experiential learning is growing stronger. In the 2027-2028 school year, Villa will adjust the master schedule to intentionally create time during school hours for experiences that may not fit into the usual class period. Called Villa Forward Community Time, this dedicated period provides opportunities for activities such as collaborative projects, faith formation, college and career preparation, alumnae and industry guest speakers, community service initiatives, and leadership development across every grade.

"Villa Forward Community Time isn't about adding more to a student's schedule," says Soley. "It's about intentionally creating time for the experiences that help students discover their passions, develop confidence, and connect what they learn in the classroom to their future."

Ultimately, experiential learning takes the student beyond the textbook, providing something a textbook can't: opportunity. Whether crafting a solution, engaging a new culture, mentoring a peer, or exploring new art or history, students learn to become active participants in the world around them. The classroom is just the beginning.

CASE STUDY COMPETITION: WHERE ETHICS MEET LEADERSHIP

—MADISON CHIOLAN '22

Villa Joseph Marie's Business Ethics Case Study Competition is quickly emerging as a signature experiential learning opportunity for students. The event challenges students from area high schools to navigate complex business decisions involving ethical dilemmas, putting their leadership, critical thinking, and teamwork skills into action. In its third year, the competition welcomed 40 teams representing 11 Catholic high schools and 157 students, bringing together aspiring leaders from across the region to tackle real-world ethical challenges.

What sets the competition apart is that Villa students help write the cases themselves. They interview leaders from businesses, healthcare organizations, nonprofits, and educational institutions across the Northeast to develop original case studies based on authentic leadership challenges. High school teams then analyze the cases, develop recommendations, and present their solutions to panels of business leaders, university faculty, and ethics professionals.

From the Michael J. Fox Foundation to Penn Medicine and Capital Health, the students learn directly from C-suite leaders. Each case allows participants to balance organizational success with integrity and compassion. This event offers opportunities for students to strengthen their skills in research, interviewing, collaboration, critical thinking, decision-making, and public speaking.

"[The competition] gives students a great opportunity to expose themselves to new ideas and also to have their voices heard," said Michael Fischer, business ethics case study coach at Father Judge High School.

The program's continuous growth has been possible with the generous support of the Connelly Foundation. This partnership has helped Villa expand opportunities for student engagement with mission-driven leadership experiences.

As students step into the roles of ethical decision-makers, Villa's Business Ethics Case Study Competition equips the next generation of leaders with the skills and confidence to navigate the complex challenges they will encounter in their studies, careers, and beyond.



Discover the experience

Scan the code to hear from students, moderators, and judges or visit **www.vjmhs.org/casestudy**



Jems Making an Impact

—ANDREA ABRAMS '27



Left to right: Andrea Abrams '27, Nora Tataren '27, Anabelle Walker '27, Allison Warunek '27, Addison Nizio '28, Gianna Na '28

This past summer, Villa relied on aspiring interns to bring campus to life with fresh perspectives. Each student took on unique projects that strengthened the Villa community and showcased the many ways Villa life provides endless opportunities.

As a marketing intern, Andrea Abrams '27 brought creativity and design to Villa's communications. She refreshed photography throughout campus to enhance the presence of the school's branding and photographed summer camps and programs. Her contributions meant positive upgrades that have elevated the Villa story.

Gianna Na '28, Villa's admission intern, played a key role in welcoming future Jems. From helping run activities at the High School Placement Test Prep Camp for seventh and eighth graders to leading sessions at Leadership Camp, Gianna was a friendly face for prospective students. She assisted with campus tours, brainstormed admission gift ideas, and answered families' questions, helping make every visitor's experience warm and memorable.

Nora Tataren '27, Annabelle Walker '27, Allison Warunek '27, and Addison Nizio '28 supported Villa behind the scenes as facilities interns. They tackled hands-on projects that will keep Villa's campus running smoothly. This included tearing down a wall in the locker room, moving furniture, painting hallways, cleaning, and organizing storage spaces. Their work significantly improved the facilities to ensure a welcoming environment for students and staff.

Forward TO our future

On a fall afternoon, the gym at Villa Joseph Marie High School will once again come alive with the camaraderie that defines the Villa community.

Student-athletes will take the court on a newly refinished floor, families will take their seats in the new bleachers, and the sounds of competition and school spirit will fill a space transformed by months of thoughtful improvements. Updated lighting, a new sound system, and modern HVAC will enhance the experience for students, spectators, and the entire school community.

The changes made on campus this past year can be seen in the upgraded gym and locker room, improved classrooms, updated offices, and a new outdoor learning space. However, the true impact of these changes is measured in the moments that form a Villa girl: students trying something new, celebrating one another's achievements, and discovering strengths they may not have known they had.

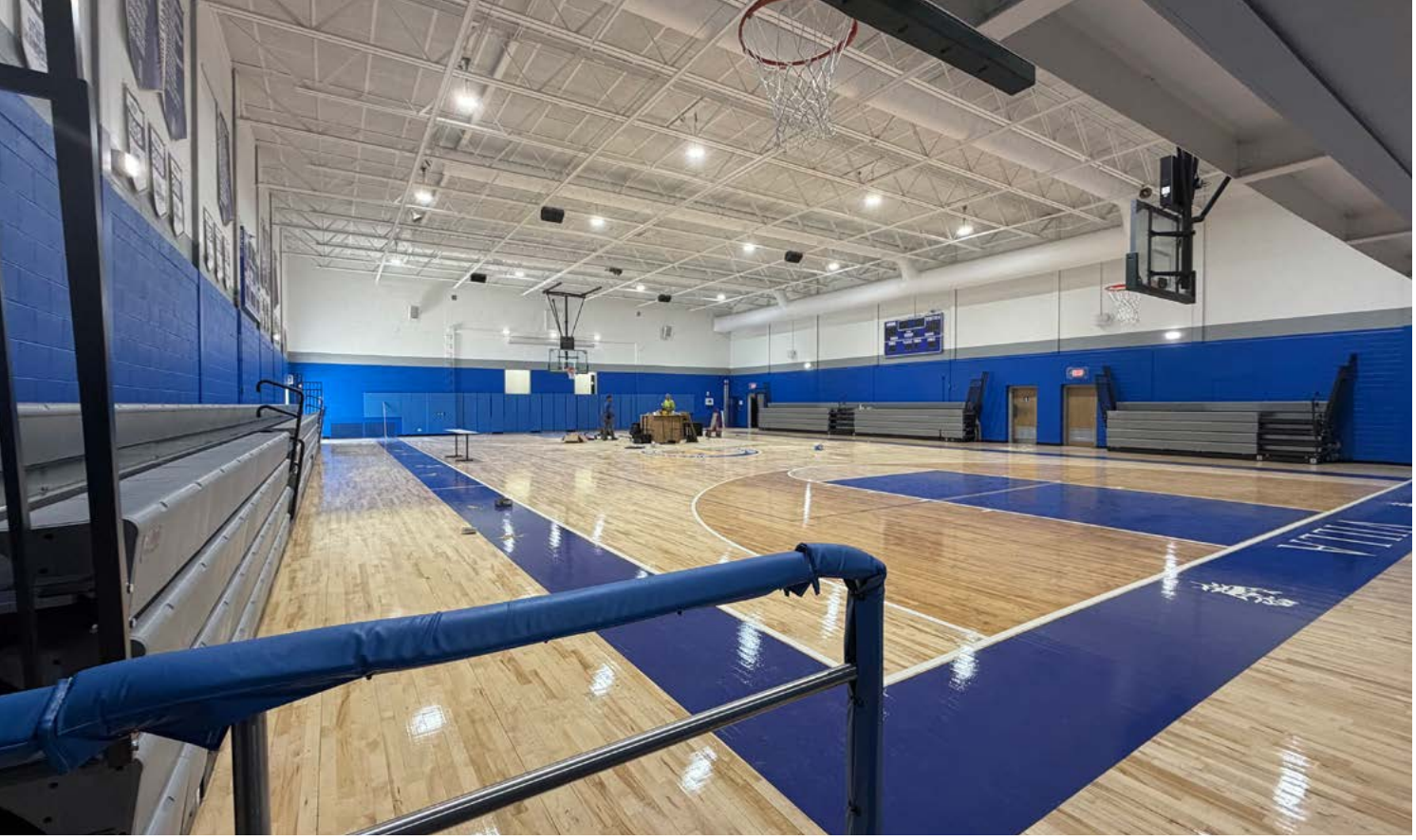
These improvements are investments in the experiences that shape a Villa education, creating spaces and support systems that allow students to grow in curiosity and purpose.

Carrying the mission forward

The refurbishments are a direct result of Villa's strategic plan, Forward to Our Future, guiding Villa to its centennial in 2032. The first phase of the plan, through the 2028-2029 school year, focuses on strengthening the student experience, supporting faculty and staff, and enhancing the campus while building a strong foundation for the future.

The plan outlines several key areas of focus,


DIAMOND KEY CLUB
EXECUTIVE BOARD



including improvements to infrastructure, professional development, and long-term financial sustainability. These priorities reflect Villa's commitment to preparing students for the future while remaining true to the mission that has defined the school for generations.

Facilities that invite students to become more

The gym refurbishment completed over the last year was designed around one goal: creating a space where students can compete, celebrate, and gather. The refreshed facility now features a refinished floor, new bleachers with ADA-accessible seating, improved LED lighting, air conditioning, updated volleyball equipment, a new scoreboard, and an upgraded sound system that enhances everything from athletic events to community traditions like Hope-A-Thon and the Kate Abel Tournament. Behind the scenes, a new electrical panel and expanded storage are already improving the daily operation of the building.

Updated workspaces for Athletic Director Amy Barr and Athletic Trainer Kelly Johnson mean more support for students.

"The renovation of our gym is a significant investment in our athletics program and in the future of our entire school community," said Barr. "We wanted to create a modern, safe, and welcoming space where every student, athlete, family member, and visitor feels they belong. This facility reflects our commitment to providing outstanding opportunities for our student-athletes while serving as a place where our community can come together, celebrate, and take pride in our school for years to come."

Improvements extend beyond the gym. New desks were added to several classrooms, including a campus favorite: new art tables in the art room. The creation of an outdoor classroom near St. Joseph's Hall established another setting for learning and retreats. Students from the environmental biology class played an active role in transforming

> "We wanted to create a modern, safe, and welcoming space where every student, athlete, family member, and visitor feels they belong."
>
> —AMY BARR, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

the space by planting flowers. A new concrete patio, freshly pruned trees, and a decorative wall create a welcoming space for learning.

The next phase of campus improvements will focus on modernizing classroom spaces, beginning with the main corridor. Updates will include new windows in select areas, additional air conditioning, refreshed flooring and walls, updated whiteboards, and new exterior doors, all designed to create learning environments that better support students and faculty.

Villa also continues to invest in the technology infrastructure that supports learning, communication, and daily operations across campus. An investment in upgraded firewall systems, wireless access points, and core network infrastructure is providing a stronger, more reliable foundation for the technology students and faculty rely on each day. The addition of professional-grade choir microphones means enhanced sound quality, allowing students' voices to be heard with greater clarity during concerts and community events.

Learning alongside students

Learning doesn't stop when students leave the classroom. Faculty and staff continue to pursue professional growth that strengthens their expertise and enhances the student experience.

This summer, Barr attended the 77th National Athletic Trainers' Association Clinical Symposia and AT Expo in Philadelphia, where sessions focused on leadership, advances in sports medicine, and best practices in athletic care. Barr and Johnson also completed continuing education focused on creating positive, inclusive athletic environments where girls feel confident to participate. In addition, some Villa staff members renewed CPR and AED certification.

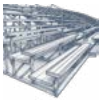
Principal Valerie Prucnal completed the AI-Ready School Leaders Certification Program, exploring how emerging technologies can thoughtfully be used to strengthen communication and decision-making in school leadership. She was also selected as a proposal reviewer for the 2027 NAIS Thrive Conference, contributing to conversations shaping the future of independent education. Her participation reflects Villa's commitment to ensuring that administrators and educators continue developing the skills needed to guide the school forward.

"Our mission calls us not just to keep pace with best practices in education, but to help lead the way," said Principal Valerie Prucnal. "When

Building a better VILLA

81

NEW ATHLETIC LOCKERS INSTALLED



NEW BLEACHERS AND ADA-ACCESSIBLE SEATING ADDED TO THE GYM



AIR CONDITIONING INSTALLED IN THE GYM



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM COMPLETED



NEW ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



UPDATED DESKS IN CLASSROOMS

"When our faculty and staff participate in professional development… they're modeling the kind of curiosity and growth we hope to instill in every Villa student."

—VALERIE PRUCNAL, PRINCIPAL

our faculty and staff participate in professional development, whether pursuing new certifications, attending national conferences, or preparing for changes like our upcoming block schedule, they're doing more than professional development; they're modeling the kind of curiosity and growth we hope to instill in every Villa student."

As the school prepares to implement a new extended period schedule in 2027, often referred to as a block schedule, faculty will engage in professional development focused on creating more opportunities for deeper learning and meaningful discussion around student engagement. A two-day workshop and on-site visits to other schools are among the ways teachers are preparing for a thoughtful transition that best supports students and their families.

Financial stewardship for lasting impact

Behind every opportunity at Villa is a community of supporters who believe in the power of a Villa education. Through generous philanthropic partnerships, the school is strengthening campus resources and expanding access.

This year, Villa received three significant grants that will strengthen the school's mission and expand opportunities for students.

The Howley Foundation awarded Villa a 10-year, $1.09 million grant to expand scholarship opportunities through the Howley Scholars Program. Beginning with the class of 2030, the program will provide half-tuition scholarships to students selected for their academic achievement, alignment with Villa's mission, and leadership potential.

Villa was also awarded a $75,000 grant through Pennsylvania's Commission on Crime and Delinquency, a state-funded program that supports campus safety improvement projects across the Commonwealth. The grant will support the replacement of exterior doors and associated windows, helping enhance the safety, efficiency, and appearance of Villa's campus while continuing the school's commitment to maintaining welcoming spaces for students,

Investing in Villa's future

$50,000

A second grant from the Connelly Foundation will support initiatives that enhance the student experience and advance Villa's strategic priorities.

$1.09 million

The Howley Foundation grant will expand scholarship opportunities through the Howley Scholars Program, providing half-tuition scholarships to students beginning with the Class of 2030.

$75,000

A Pennsylvania Safety Grant will support the replacement of exterior doors and associated windows, strengthening the safety, efficiency, and welcoming environment of Villa's campus.



faculty, and the community.

A $50,000 grant from the Connelly Foundation will enhance the student experience and advance Villa's strategic priorities. This is the second grant Villa has received from the Connelly Foundation, which previously provided the school with a grant to support the expansion of the Business Ethics Case Study Competition in 2024.

In addition, the school received approval for a rescope of a previous Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant, which provides matching funds at a fifty-percent level for certain capital projects. This $1.5 million grant will pay for a portion of the gym and classroom refurbishment project.

These gifts reflect the confidence that philanthropic partners have in Villa's mission and their shared commitment to ensuring that future generations of young women have the opportunity to experience an education rooted in excellence and purpose.

Legacy leads us

Every investment in Villa's future serves the same purpose: to create the environment where young women can become more.

More confident in their abilities. More courageous in pursuing opportunities. More grounded in faith and purpose. More steadfast in leading with compassion and integrity.

The measure of Villa's success is found in the women who leave Villa knowing who they are, recognizing their gifts, and understanding the impact they are called to make. That is the work of formation. And that is the mission Villa continues to carry forward.

JOIN THE MOMENTUM

Invest in Villa's future and help bring *Forward to Our Future* to life. Learn more about the strategic plan—and how you can be part of what's next—at **www.vjmhs.org/plan**



A new tradition BEGINS

School traditions help define the culture at Villa Joseph Marie High School. Rooted in Villa's mission of empowering young women through faith, education, and service in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Casimir, Villa welcomed a new tradition this year: the Emblem Program. Created through Student Council initiatives, the program strengthens leadership, mentorship, and sisterhood across grade levels.

The Emblem Program builds on Villa's close-knit community by creating relationships beyond individual graduating classes. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators are divided among four Emblems inspired by Villa's crest: the Crown, Sword, Lily, and Jem. Each represents a value that encourages students to grow throughout high school.

Guided by the words of Mother Maria Kaupas, "Always more, always better, always with love," the program connects the school's traditions with the charism of the Sisters of St. Casimir.

Each group's emblem has its own symbolism and purpose. The Crown represents faithfulness and dedication to leadership rooted in commitment. The Sword reflects courage and selflessness. The Lily highlights integrity and living with a sincere focus on God and service, and the Jem celebrates each student's unique gifts and contributions to the Villa community.

Community across grade levels

Introduced during Freshman Orientation in fall 2025, the program brought students from every grade together in intentionally mixed advisory groups to create communities that extend outside the classroom. Throughout the year, Emblems came together for discussions, prayer, service projects, team-building activities, and competitions.

Spirit Week became one of the program's most exciting changes. Instead of competing class against class, students competed as Emblems, working alongside students from every grade level. They earned points through school spirit, service, events, and challenges, culminating in the inaugural Mother Maria Kaupas Cup. The Crown Emblem earned the honor of becoming the first champions.

The leaders of Student Council were a major driving force for the program, planning competitions, leading advisory activities, welcoming new students, and building excitement during the year. The leadership that was demonstrated showed that serving others goes beyond holding a title; it means creating opportunities for others to feel included, encouraged, and connected.

Mentorship opportunities arose as upperclassmen encouraged younger students, offered guidance, and modeled Villa's values through everyday actions. Younger students found role models to help them navigate high school while forming friendships they may not have otherwise made across grade levels.

Faculty, administration, and staff eagerly embraced the program. As cheerleaders during competitions, participants in advisory events, and celebrants of school traditions, they demonstrated how the program belongs to the entire Villa community. Their dedication and involvement reflect the importance of the shared responsibilities of leadership, service, and sisterhood.

A legacy begins

As the inaugural class of the Emblem Program, this year's students established traditions that will continue to shape Villa for years to come. More than just a friendly competition, the program will be a lasting expression of Villa's mission to build relationships rooted in faith, integrity, courage, and love, while creating opportunities to lead and serve.

The Emblem Program begins a tradition that unites generations of students, strengthens sisterhood, and reminds every student that she belongs to something greater than herself.

—MADISON CHIOLAN '22



Each group's emblem has its own symbolism and purpose.

The **Crown** represents faithfulness and dedication to leadership rooted in commitment.

The **Sword** reflects courage and selflessness.

The **Lily** highlights integrity and living with a sincere focus on God and service.

The **Jem** celebrates each student's unique gifts and contributions to the Villa community.

A Year of Champions



The 2025–2026 school year was one for the record books at Villa Joseph Marie High School. Villa teams captured four District Championships in **volleyball, soccer, basketball, and softball**, while individual athletes and teams made their mark at the regional and national levels.

"The 2025–2026 school year was another record year for the Jems," said Athletics Director Amy Barr. "Beyond the championships and individual accomplishments, our student-athletes embraced teamwork, service, and the opportunity to give back to our community."

Rowing

Villa rowing had a historic season, placing three boats on the podium at the Philadelphia Scholastic Rowing Association City Championships—the most in program history. The Novice 4+ and Varsity Pair both captured first place, with the Pair becoming the first Villa boat ever to compete in—and win—the event. The Varsity 4+ finished third, returning Villa to the podium for the first time in four years and earning a bid to the Scholastic National Championships in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. At Nationals, the Varsity 4+ placed 11th in the nation, the best finish in Villa Joseph Marie rowing history.



Track and Field

Villa athletes Violet Katz '28 and Rafaela Alviggi '27 represented Villa at the Indoor Track Nationals, competing among the nation's top high school athletes.

2025-2026 AACA LEAGUE ALL-STARS

GOLF
Ava Bachinsky

CROSS COUNTRY
Maddie Heine
Eloise Buckleman

FIELD HOCKEY
Parker Shore
2nd team

VOLLEYBALL
Avery Akright
1st team

Grace Kravcak
2nd team

Kara Whalen
2nd team

SOCCER
Taylor Houtz
1st team

Grace Cornett
2nd team

Addison Holmes
2nd team

Zoe Vernick
2nd team











NEXT STOP: COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Haley Dickson
Basketball
Delaware Valley University

Maura Doughty
Rowing
George Washington University

Grace Kravcak
Volleyball
Holy Family University

TENNIS
Olivia Dungan
Katie Laufer
Amelia Mitchell
Corinne Tavani

LACROSSE
Isabella Dippolito
Honorable Mention

BASKETBALL
Avery Akright
1st team

Lucy Jasionis
2nd team

SOFTBALL
Faith Fox
2nd team

Kate Stanton
2nd team

TRACK AND FIELD
Rafaela Alviggi
1st team, 100M, 200M, 4x100

Gianna Bailey
1st team, 4x100

Maggie Monahan
1st team, 4x100

Allison Warunek
1st team, 4x100

Violet Katz
2nd team, high jump





2025-2026 Event Highlights

DESIGNER HANDBAG BINGO AND ALUMNAE HAPPY HOUR

The Villa Joseph Marie Alumnae Association welcomed approximately 40 alumnae back to campus on November 7 for an intimate Happy Hour in Maria Hall. The gathering offered a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere where guests could unwind and reconnect over refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. Later that evening, Villa hosted Designer Handbag Bingo. Alumnae and their family and friends joined in the fun of bingo, raffles, and prizes in support of Villa's academic development and scholarship programs. The evening beautifully showcased the strength of the Villa community, coming together for a memorable night that blended camaraderie with meaningful support for Villa's mission.

TRENTON THUNDER GAME

Villa alumnae took over the ballpark at the Trenton Thunder game on June 2. From cheers in the stands to catching up with lifelong friends, it was a perfect night of Jem spirit, memories, and sisterhood under the lights.

Interested in getting involved with the Alumnae Association? Join a project or committee and share your talents and interests. Email alumnae@vjmhs.org to learn more.





ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP TEAM

Anna (Orgasan) Dailey '96, President

Maggie Wade '19, Treasurer

Jennifer (Riley) Abruzzese '99, Secretary

alumnae@vjmhs.org

ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Carolyn Mueller '18, Communications

Emily Cahill '20, Social Media Lead

Kristina Mueller '18, Social Media Member

Kelly Eidenshink Somogyi '01, Professional Development

ALUMNAE RELATIONS OFFICE

Cathleen Murway
(Danielle '91, Jordan '20)
Alumnae Relations Manager
215-357-8810 ext. 130
cmurw@vjmhs.org

STAY CONNECTED

@VillaJosephMarieHS

@villajosephmarie

Villa Joseph Marie

Alumnae Facebook Group: www.facebook.com/groups/vjmalum

Class Notes

Share good news with us! To share awards, accomplishments, milestones, and celebrations, visit ***www.vjmhs.org/alumnae/update***



Peggy Schenk '60



Maureen Fennessy Hobbs '69



Left to right: Jessica Simon Tecce '03, Carly Stunder DeGrasse '03, Lisa Burns '03, and Molly O'Mara Hufnagel '03

1960s

Joanne Smith Pawsat '60 recently celebrated 60 years of marriage, with six children and 10 grandchildren. Joanne shares, "Feeling blessed! Proud to be a VJM alumna!"

Kathleen Hihn Petrone '60 is now retired after a 50-year real estate career in sales and private investment properties.

Peggy Schenk '60 recently visited Machu Picchu.

Mary Jean "Jeanie" Dever Biser '62 tells us, "The class of '62 is still going strong. We meet regularly and enjoy our time together. Four of us were fortunate enough to have lunch at Villa not too long ago."

Mary Schneider Zaccardi '65 writes, "Thank you for your continued dedication to the young women of tomorrow."

Maureen Fennessy Hobbs '69 models lifelong learning: "This year will be remembered because of vehicle stories—some new, and one that became the focal point of a vacation. We have downsized to one car this year and will need to coordinate our schedules in the year ahead. It also required me to learn a new skill: having to drive a push button start. We hope that the year brings you happy adventures and good health to enjoy them. Best wishes!"

1970s

Lynne Jarczynski Smejkal '70 shares, "I loved my four years at Villa Joe! I am a retired physical therapist after being in practice with my husband at a local hospital and rehab facilities over the past 50 years. We are married 51 years and have three grown children and six grandchildren and one on the way. We live in Absecon by the great New Jersey beaches."

Lorna Pontarelli Fish '77 had the pleasure of hosting relatives from Italy over the holiday season. She writes, "Congratulations to the Class of 2026!"

2000s

Amy Mayrhofer Imhoff '02 is a STEM communication strategist specializing in space science outreach, having served as a communications consultant for Princeton University's NASA-funded Map Mission, where she leads digital engagement and public awareness efforts for a team of more than 700 scientists. With a background in space partnerships across NASA, U.S. Space Force, and more, she is dedicated to making complex space science accessible for girls and underrepresented learners in STEM!

Lisa Burns '03, Molly O'Mara Hufnagel '03, Jessica Simon Tecce '03, and Carly Stunder DeGrasse '03 recently gathered together.

Danielle Paleafico '05 has been named to PRWeek's prestigious 2026 40 Under 40 list. Danielle is currently a vice president at Coyne Public Relations.



Kirsten Kuchera Gordon '11



Left to right: Emily Davis '14, Shannon Capasso '14, Rebekah Thomas '14, and Lauren Gouger Roberto '14



Left to right: Camila Drobac '19, Shannon Capasso '14, and Michaela Drobac '16



Natalie Santucci '16

2010s

On Saturday, June 28, 2025, alumna **Shannon Capasso '14** married Holy Ghost Prep alumnus Kye Drobac '14. Included in the wedding were fellow Jems **Lauren Gouger Roberto '14**, **Emily Davis '14**, and **Rebekah Thomas '14** as well as Shannon's two new sisters-in-law, **Michaela Drobac '16** and **Camila Drobac '19**.

Kirsten Kuchera Gordon '11 and her husband, Forrest, welcomed their first child, Elise Roseanna, on September 6, 2025. They continue to live in Brighton, Mass. Kirsten is an associate actuary with John Hancock.

Gianna Gagliardi '14 is a local pediatric dentist. After graduating from Temple University in 2019, she continued to dental school at Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry. She shares, "Wanting to provide specialized care, I completed my pediatric dental residency at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children this past summer. I now work alongside my dad at Children First Dental in Richboro, Pa. I am grateful for the opportunity to grow and work together, while caring for my hometown community."

Natalie Santucci '16 married her high school sweetheart on April 26, 2026, and graduated from medical school—the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine—in June. She is looking forward to her career as a pediatrician.

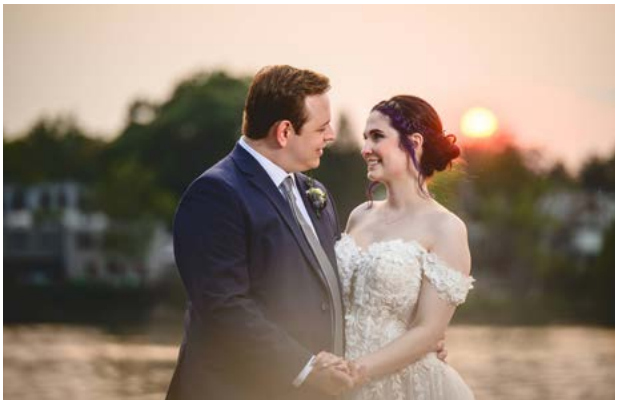
Isabella Brady (Olimpo) '16 shares, "I recently got married to a lovely gentleman named Christian Brady on September 5, 2025!"

Briana Hocker '17 and **Rebecca DeSantis '18** ran in the 14th annual Dewey Goes Pink 5K. The entire town of Dewey Beach turns pink to honor Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Proceeds from the event are donated to a local breast cancer foundation.

Devin Shennard '17 recently received her Ph.D. in Biology with a concentration in cell and molecular biology from Lehigh University.

Carolyn Mueller '18 is a member of Villa's Alumnae Association Executive Board. A finance manager in Bensalem, she recently completed her MBA at The Catholic University while working full-time.

Kristina Mueller '18 is the Alumnae Association social media member and third-year med student at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.



Isabella Brady (Olimpo) '16

2020s

MaryFrancis McNulty '22 marched in the Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day parade, carrying the banner in front of the pilgrim turkey balloon. She shares, "It was a fun and memorable holiday!"

Nora Fleming '24 returned to Villa recently to complete observation hours as part of her education degree program at Penn State University.



CLASSROOM TO CAREER

Where Villa connections lead



—MADISON CHIOLAN '22

The transition from the classroom to a career begins with gaining hands-on experiences, developing skills, and seeking out opportunities to explore potential interests. While this transition can seem overwhelming to college students, internships are a great way to ease into the workforce and find jobs that really cater to one's interests.

Networking is an essential step in career development, and it starts right here at Villa Joseph Marie High School—similar to how it did for Madison Chiolan '22. A summer internship that started at Visit Bucks County in Newtown, Pa., became an opportunity to experience the world of marketing, communications, and tourism firsthand while applying skills developed throughout her education at Villa and in college.

Visit Bucks County (VBC) is the official tourism promotion agency for Bucks County. As a destination marketing organization, VBC works to promote travel to and within Bucks County by showcasing the businesses, attractions, events, and experiences that make the county unique. Through strategic partnerships, storytelling, and innovative marketing strategies, VBC supports the local tourism and hospitality industry while encouraging visitors to explore all that Bucks County has to offer.

In the summer of 2024, Chiolan had the pleasure of interning alongside fellow alumna Julia Noone '22 and was mentored by the current marketing and communications manager of VBC, Megan Connelly '19. Chiolan gained insight into different career paths in marketing and communications within the tourism and hospitality industry. The internship experience allowed her to support business efforts while also learning how organizations use storytelling, digital content, media relations, and internships to connect audiences to destinations.

"The experience furthered my understanding of how marketing goes beyond just promoting a product or service to make meaningful connections and tell a story," Chiolan shares. "I was able to develop my organization, communication, writing, and social media skills while learning from industry professionals."

Career paths through tourism

VBC gives interns hands-on experiences that help support marketing and communications initiatives. Day-to-day intern responsibilities included writing blog content, editing and scheduling photo and video content, researching industry trends, and turning creativity into ideas that back promotional efforts. Through overseeing VBC's internship program, Connelly has helped provide students with opportunities to gain real-world experience while developing skills that translate into future careers.

"My experiences at Villa helped shape my path, providing me with skills I still use today. Writing, organization, and leadership are among the most valuable skills I developed and have played an important role in my current position in marketing and communications



Left to right: Madison Chiolan ’22, Julia Noone ’22, and Megan Connelly ’19

> “My experiences at Villa helped shape my path, providing me with skills that I still use today. Writing, organization, and leadership are among the most valuable skills I developed and have played an important role in my current position.”
>
> —MEGAN CONNELLY ’19

with Visit Bucks County,” Connelly expressed.

For Noone, experiences in the tourism industry highlight the impact of destination marketing. VBC allowed her to find an industry she was passionate about while tailoring to her career interest in marketing and communications.

“Working in tourism has shown me a new side of social media work. It has shown me the importance of promoting a destination for travelers and what comes with it,” Noone shared. “Through my work with Visit Philadelphia and Visit Bucks County, I’ve gained experience in destination marketing and learned how storytelling shapes the way people connect with a place.”

Throughout Noone’s roles, she’s worked on the media side of marketing by creating content for TikTok and Instagram and capturing photo and video content. She’s also worked on the research side of things, finding local events and attractions to better support media campaigns, including Visit Philadelphia’s “Things to Do” series and VBC’s “What’s Up This Weekend” content.

Investing in the future of tourism

Beyond internships, VBC is committed to investing in the next generation of tourism and hospitality professionals. To extend their dedication to career building, they offer the Visit Bucks County Hospitality and Tourism Scholarship for high school seniors pursuing careers in tourism, hospitality management, culinary arts, event planning, and destination marketing.

The scholarship recognizes students who demonstrate leadership, community engagement, and a strong interest in the tourism and hospitality industry, helping support future professionals as they begin their careers.

For Chiolan, VBC was an impactful step in her marketing journey, helping her to explore media and tourism industries and giving her the ability to combine strategy, creativity, and storytelling. Through experiences like these, Villa students and alumnae can find many ways, even locally, to build professional skills, expand their networks, and discover opportunities beyond the classroom.

In Memoriam

ALUMNAE

Theresa Sonia Mackey '48, sister of Patricia Mackey Graber '53 and sister-in-law of the late Therese Andrulis Mackey '48

Karmena Teresa Kreivenas Peetz '52

Ruth Marie Cheleden Dextraze '53, second cousin of Shannon Martin '15

Caroline Jakelwicz Czepiel '54

Helen Mary Eno Conway '55

Elaine Marie Shanahan McKenney '59, great-aunt of Jolene Shimp '23

Mary Anne Wellendorf '59, sister of the late Barbara Wellendorf Freed '63

Theresa Elizabeth Durkalo Bohenek '60

Ann Marie Reimel Myers '60

Margaret Booth Pizzo '60, grandmother of Marisa Morano '17

Joan Catherine Pruehs '60

Anne "Nancy" Jolaine Batteer Price '61

Claudia Mildred Grimm '62

Patricia Sarah Ragan Kivlin '62, sister of Eileen Ragan Talbot '65

Thursa Roadarmel Dennis '63

Barbaraanne Theresa Breithaupt '64

Patricia Marie Sheridan Lyons '65, former sister-in-law of Therese Rodden '63

Kathleen M. Jauss Criste '67

Mary Ann Keating Davis '67, mother of Mary Beth Davis Walinskas '96, grandmother of Brynn Davis '22 and Bridget Walinskas '26, sister of the late Diane Keating Geddes '75, and aunt of Kellyann Geddes Rogers '05 and Shannon Geddes Tague '09

Mary Jane Robinson Krotz '69, aunt of Kelly Adams Jourdain '97, Megan Adams Jones '99 and Katelyn Adams Felus '04, and sister-in-law of Marguerite and Armand Adams, former VJM staff

Linda Marie Scott Kuntz '71

Barbara Joan Moran '76

Helen E. Lake Goins '77

Mariellen Fonash Switch '80, sister of Margaret Mary Fonash Munsell '81

Kara Denise Koljian Howard '81

Tricia Lynn Stuart Shafie '92, daughter of Marie Roche Stuart '68

Kathryn Laura Craig '97, cousin of Lt. Amanda Watts '11

Amanda C. Elm '97, sister of Marisa R. Elm McHugh '94

Kathleen Chlebda Hoffman '06, sister of Christine Chlebda '08 and sister-in-law of Kathleen Cairo Hoffman '06

VJM COMMUNITY

Nancy Ann McFadden, mother of Maura McFadden '00, former VJM Board of Directors, and Bridget McFadden Urban '02, sister-in-law of Teresa Smeraglio, VJM Counseling Department assistant, and aunt of Meghann McCloskey Betz '97, Erin McCloskey '99, Courtney Murray Whalen '03, Kylie Murray Biting '05, Megan Verdeur Wager '08, Quinn DePentino '10, and Kylie Smeriglio '10

Brian Morley, brother of Melissa Morley Amour '90, former VJM director of communication and alumnae relations, uncle of Lauren Amour '17, father of Kaitlin Morley Polnasek, former VJM faculty, and cousin of Dr. Cara Riley Wineburg '96

Natasha Nathaniel-Curley, sister-in-law of Hynea Redd, former VJM director of marketing

Molly Murphy Quinn, former VJM history teacher and Mock Trial coach

Mark Anthony Vizza, brother-in-law of Tricia Vizza, executive assistant to VJM president, uncle of Rose Vizza '20, and cousin of Kalin Vizza '25

Richard Douglas Weaver, grandfather of Stephanie Weaver '05, VJM faculty, and Megan Weaver Hurst '07

FAMILY MEMBERS

Husband/wife, parents, siblings, children

Marvin Arrighy Sr., father of Susan Arrighy Strausser '66 and Janet Arrighy Skelton '76

Lorri Jean Baba, sister of Susan Pauzer Herbert '76

John Robert Boardman, husband of Joanne Eksterowicz Boardman '60

Judith Ann Bork, mother of Dina Bork Ruggiero '83

John Joseph Bowes Jr., former husband of Patricia Bock Bowes-Dolan '69

John Richard Burg, brother of Christine Burg Shay '63

Christopher Michael Bye, husband of Elizabeth Darrah-Bye '88, uncle of Michaela Hemphill '25, and cousin of Jennifer Tomlinson Forman '93, Caitlin Forman '24, and Lindsay Morris '21

Edward "Gary" Campion, brother of the late Virginia Campion Power '58

Lorraine Carey, daughter of Janice Lempa Paget '66

Jeffrey W. Chalela, brother of Kristin Chalela Bagnell '08

Steven Alan Chester, husband of Cynthia Connor Chester '76

Gerry Bruce Cofer Sr., husband of Lisa Derkits Cofer '76

Joseph Edward Coleman, brother of Patricia Ann Coleman '54

John Collins, father of Krista Collins Walters '88

George Sterling Coyne, II, husband of Karyn Kudra Coyne '74

Thomas Donald Craig, father of the late Kathryn Craig '97 and uncle of Lt. Amamda Watts '11

Jeanne D'Emidio, stepmother of Dyan D'Emidio '73

Joseph Nicholas D'Emidio, father of Dyan D'Emidio '73

Grady Lewis Dennis Jr., son of the late Thursa Roadarmel Dennis '63

Grady Lewis Dennis Sr., former husband of the late Thursa Roadarmel Dennis '63

Thomas "Duke" DeSanto, brother of Carol Ann DeSanto Sarrasin '60 and the late Dolores de Santo Gillespie '56

Frank Dick Jr., brother of the late Rosemary Dick Thompson '51

Brother John Dochkus, O.S.F.S., brother of Carol Dochkus Romano '65

Robert Patrick Doyle, brother of the late Eileen Doyle Wychunis '74

Dr. Stephen Duprey, husband of Margaret Cunningham Duprey '74

Christina Ann Dymek, sister of Lisa Bednarz Tretter '04 and cousin of Emily Pellichero '13

James Robert Forte, husband of Karen Fisher Forte '75

John Francis, brother of Lisa Singleton Koziol '85 and Cecelia Singleton Woolerton '91, and uncle of Georgia Kulp '17 and Brigid Woolerton '22

Janet Susan Friedman, sister of Debra Friedman Walters '73

Dorothy Fritz, mother of Debra Kidon Polichetti '81

Laura Garstka, mother of Barbara Garstka Wright '84, **Bernadette Garstka Galasso '85**, and Theresa Garstka Keenan '85

Eleanor Geisheimer, mother of Julia Geisheimer Ludes '84

Richard Wayne Gerling, husband of Clare Garson Gerling '65

Maxwell John Gola, son of

Tamara Maxwell Gola ’78 and nephew of Kathleen Maxwell Boucher ’70 and Deborah Maxwell Markert ’73

Thomas Gover, son of the late Elizabeth Ann O’Connell Gover ’59

Ken Grafenstine, brother of the late Marianne Grafenstine Powers ’60

Irene Graham, mother of Mary Graham Haas ’91 and Leighann Graham-Elton ’92

Genevieve Greener, mother of Deborah Greener Ross ’78 and Mary Greener Steigerwait ’80

Thomas Gwiazdowski, brother of Mary Catherine Gwiazdowski Wiltrout ’80 and uncle of Officer Jessica Gwiazdowski ’12

Dolores Anne Hall, mother of Erin Rafferty Maiolino ’90

Richard Harvey, husband of the late Judith Cassidy Harvey ’59 and brother-in-law of the late Eileen Cassidy ’62

Mary Patricia Heenan, mother of Mary Ann Heenan Mangini ’73

Edward Hilem, husband of Nancy Hayes Hilem ’73 and brother-in-law of Susan Hayes Gardner ’71

Robert Jordan Jr., son of the late Pamela Parola Jordan ’66

Brian Gerard Junod, brother of Lysa C. Bellini-Peters ’91

Leo Keiffer, brother of Hilda Keiffer Fedak ’62

Mariann Keogh, mother of Meghan Keogh ’00

Mary Sokol Kness, mother of Catherine Kness ’67 and Marsha Kness ’69

Michael Kotwicki, III, husband of Dr. April McGowan Kotwicki ’98, father of Grace Kotwicki ’29, brother of Maria Kotwicki Nicholson ’08, and brother-in-law of Erin McGovern Arkin ’08, Angela McGovern Chapman ’15, Megan Armstrong McGovern ’02 and Renée Kitchenman McGovern ’02

Robert Laigaie Sr., husband of Joanne Marsteller Laigaie ’69

John LaMont, husband of Patricia Keiser LaMont ’64

Francis Anthony Lazenka Jr., father of Capt. Colette Lazenka ’98

Maryann Catherine Lombardo, mother of Kathleen Lombardo Michaleski ’98

Thomas Patrick Maher, husband of Barbara Visone Maher ’65

Daniel Franklin Maloney Jr., husband of Kathleen Dornisch Maloney ’61

Kevin Francis Matthews, father of Jennifer Matthews Prebola ’93

Colleen Maurer, mother of Bridget Maurer Bellomy ’87

Robert McCartney, brother of Lorraine McCartney Takacs ’86

Robert Joseph McCauley, former husband of Edna Hoen McCauley ’62

Frederick McCormick Jr., father of Colleen McCormick McGuire ’07

James Joseph McDonald, father of Erin McDonald Harrar ’98

Ellen Anne McGee, sister of Patricia McGee O’Rourke ’93

Robert Francis Meyer, father of Diane Meyer ’81

Phyllis Militar, mother of Maria Budano Haff ’86

Robert James Morrone, father of Lisa Morrone Reece ’92

Michael Tully Mulcahy, husband of Nancy McGinley Mulcahy ’68, brother-in-law of Patricia McGinley Winward ’71 and Suzanne McGinley Giuffrida ’77, and uncle of Patricia Winward Lentz ’95, Eileen McGinley Robus ’04 and Alicia McGinley Senatore ’07

Alice Murphy, mother of Joanne Murphy Ramsey ’70

Mary Cerebe Noble, sister of the late Monica Mary Cerebe ’60

Daniel Francis Nolan Jr., husband of Catherine Gallagher Nolan ’03 and brother-in-law of Margaret Gallagher Sokohl ’00 and Julia Gallagher ’17

Everett Livingston Norton Jr., husband of the late Margaret Woods Norton ’73 and brother-in-law of (Mary) Ellen Woods Green ’66

Kathleen Ott, mother of Kelly Dougherty Gillenwater ’93

Lloyd Joseph Patton Jr., father of (Mary) Colleen Patton O’Brien ’95 and uncle of Keri Ann Surgoft Tracy ’99 and Bridget Surgoft Cavalcanti ’02

James Petrone, son of Kathleen Hihn Petrone ’60

William Daniel Pfender, stepfather of Joan McGranaghan Fox ’81 and Mary McGranaghan Marquis ’83 and grandfather of Nicole Pfender ’07, Jacqueline Pfender Sherman ’11 and Rebecca Pfender ’12

Mary Donohue Pine, mother of Dr. Sharon Pine ’90 and Janice Pine Slavin ’93

Richard Powers Sr., husband of the late Marianne Grafenstine Powers ’60

Jennifer Prince, daughter of Carol Krupsky Happersett ’60

Ryan Prince, grandson of Carol Krupsky Happersett ’60

Elena Rita Priole, mother of Maria Priole Cagliola ’92

John Ramsey, husband of the late Theresa McDonald Ramsey ’84 and brother-in-law of Jennifer McDonald Fouty ’86

Eileen Brigid Rodden, sister of Therese Rodden ’63 and Mary Catherine Rodden Snyder ’65

Donna Kensy Rudick, mother of Andrea Kensy ’06

Eileen Sabaliauskas, mother of Andrea Sabaliauskas ’92

Neil Sagot, father of Jennifer Sagot ’93, grandfather of Elizabeth Cornett ’23 and Grace Cornett ’28, and uncle of Lauren Mallee McLernan ’11

Eugene Santarlas, III, father of Jennifer Santarlas Heckman ’95 and uncle of the late Diana Radzevich Moots ’88

Patricia Sherwood, mother of Andrea M. Sherwood MacMillan ’94

Samuel Skurka, brother of Francine Skurka French ’02

Joan Marie Slack, mother of Donna Slack ’89, Dawn Slack Denkin ’93, and Billy-Jo Slack Jordan ’96

Bernadette Theresa Surgoft, mother of Keri Ann Surgoft Tracy ’99 and Bridget Surgoft Cavalcanti ’02 and aunt of (Mary) Colleen Patton O’Brien ’95

John Joseph Suscovich, husband of the late Karen Martin Suscovich ’65

Sean Thomas, husband of Sheila Garrity Thomas ’73

Bernadette Trappler, sister of Regina Thomas Clifford ’63

Michelle Anne Valentine, sister of the late Anne “Nancy” Jolaine Batteer Price ’61

Joseph Varallo Sr., father of Mary Alice Varallo ’85 and uncle of Erin Hoffmaster Kini ’03

Rhoda Vogel, mother of the late Pamella Vogel ’72

William Weigle, father of Meghan Weigle Gleba ’07

John Edward Wilkinson Sr., husband of Marie Louise Slebodnick Wilkinson ’57

Mark Stephen Worhach, father of Lauren Keiser-Worhach Eble ’01 and father-in-law of Dr. Jennifer McLaren ’03

Arthur John Younglove, stepfather of Jennifer Jones Akins ’83 and uncle of Christina Gesualdi ’03

John Kenneth Zerbe, husband of the late Maria Elena Buccello Zerbe ’59 and cousin of Dr. Colleen Feriod Cuffaro ’02



JOURNEY TOWARD SAINTHOOD

Villa alumna Maria Middleton '21 continues to inspire the Villa community through her remarkable faith, joy, and message of hope. Diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor while a Villa student, Maria touched countless lives through her trust in God and commitment to others. Her final words, "Think hope," continue to inspire people through the work of the Think Hope Foundation.

In June, a petition was presented to Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez requesting the introduction of Maria's cause for canonization in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The process is in its earliest stages, as the Church begins reviewing Maria's life and determining whether she demonstrated heroic virtue.

The journey toward sainthood includes four stages: a local investigation, recognition of heroic virtue, beatification following an approved miracle, and canonization as a saint after a second approved miracle. The process is a careful and lengthy one, seeking to recognize individuals whose lives continue to inspire faith.

The Villa community will continue to accompany the Middleton family in prayer and share updates as this meaningful journey progresses.

A Mass observing the sixth anniversary of Maria's passing will be held at 5 p.m. on October 5 at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pa., with Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez, Archbishop of Philadelphia, serving as the main celebrant.



Fireside with the Sisters

The Villa community gathered with Sisters Immacula and Elizabeth Ann during a Fireside Chat in March to celebrate the enduring connection between Villa and the Sisters of St. Casimir and to learn more about the legacy of Venerable Servant of God Mother Maria Kaupas, our foundress.

Following the Legacy Mass celebrating the Feast of St. Casimir, students, faculty, staff, and families heard stories of the Sisters' journey, the founding of Villa in Maria Hall, and the mission that continues to guide the school today.

The Sisters reflected on the many hours of service Villa students give, both within the school community and beyond. As Sr. Elizabeth Ann shared, visiting Villa feels like "the Disney World of high schools" because of the joy, spirit, and sense of community that fills the campus.

The gathering was a reminder of the unique bond between Villa and the Sisters of St. Casimir. Through opportunities such as the Fireside Chat and classroom projects highlighting individual Sisters, students continue to deepen their understanding of the women whose faith and dedication shaped Villa's foundation. This fall, when Sr. Immacula celebrated her 70th Jubilee in Chicago, she was recognized by the Villa community with the dedication of Villa's outdoor classroom.

Founded in 1907 by Venerable Servant of God Mother Maria Kaupas in Scranton, Pa., the Sisters of St. Casimir are "a congregation of women religious dedicated to offering the hope and joy of a faith-filled life to our world." Today, the Sisters live in the Chicago area and in Avellaneda, Argentina, continuing the mission and teachings of Mother Maria.

















VILLA JOSEPH MARIE HIGH SCHOOL

1180 HOLLAND ROAD HOLLAND, PA 18966

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Southampton, PA
Permit No. 111

villajosephmarie villa-joseph-marie VillaJosephMarieHS

Be part of **what's next**

Villa is moving forward, and there's no better way to experience our momentum than by joining us on campus. Throughout the year, our events bring together students, families, alumnae, and friends to celebrate achievements, build new connections, and continue the traditions that make Villa feel like home.

Commissioning Mass/Grandparents' Mass (freshmen and juniors)
SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

Handbag Bingo
NOVEMBER 6, 2026

Fall Show
NOVEMBER 12-15, 2026

Thanksgiving Feast and Career Day
NOVEMBER 24, 2026

Yearbook Party, Class of 2026
NOVEMBER 25, 2026

Kate Abel Memorial Basketball Tournament
NOVEMBER 28, 2026

Christmas Social
DECEMBER 3, 2026

Case Study Competition
DECEMBER 5, 2026

Legacy Mass/Grandparents' Mass (sophomores and seniors)
MARCH 4, 2027

St. Casimir Day of Service
MARCH 5, 2027

Casimir Dinner
APRIL 1, 2027

Spring Show
APRIL 8-11, 2027

Art Show and Spring Concert
APRIL 14, 2027

Case Study Competition
APRIL 24, 2027

Hope-A-Thon
APRIL 30, 2027

Fore the Girls! Golf Outing
MAY 10, 2027

*Visit **www.vjmhs.org/events** for more information.*

