Let me express my sincere thanks to all of you who have made a contribution to the school during the past fiscal year. Your generosity has allowed us to weather the present economic downturn with a renewed spirit. The Ursulines have been most generous. Yet, 2010 may still hold many unexpected surprises for our country. As a consequence, we remain vigilant and observant for any winds of change that may have a profound impact on our students, their families, and our school. Our attempts at cost cutting and increasing our enrollment remain our major objectives for the new year.

We are pleased to announce that we have been awarded a second Taproot Foundation grant to help us craft a marketing brochure that will appeal to foundations, donors, and prospective students. Ms. Vanessa Williams has graciously given us important leads in music and drama circles to help us continue our efforts in promoting arts as an enhancement to our academics and service platforms. This is in addition to our existing partnership with the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s Urban Voices program.

Our young alums have responded with great enthusiasm in assisting with our Salsa and Chips success in November. They also held a phone-a-thon contacting those prospective students who attended our open house in October. It is great to see our young alums willing to fill the shoes of those alums who have been faithful, extremely generous, and loyal to their alma mater. We attempted our first flea market in December and hope to make it a yearly event.

Our faculty continues to inspire. For the first time, our students had the opportunity to compete against another school in an academic competition on MSG Varsity. We won! It was broadcast on December 18th. We now have a budding guitar group. Our students garner praise for their step dancing prowess. The drawings and paintings of our Art Academy are among the best in the city. Our Liturgy Club uplifts our celebrations of Mass. More importantly, our students are made aware of the importance of service and the needs of the global community, as instilled by the Ursuline tradition. On December 7th we had a school assembly on human trafficking sponsored by our National Honor Society and reinforced by a presentation from one of the members of the New York State Assembly.

Our 2009 graduates garnered $4.4 million in scholarships, evidence of the academic standards that have been a part of the rich tradition of our school.

It is interesting to note (and foundations now ask): how many graduates finish college in four years? We are proud to say that in a recent survey of our graduates (1995-2006) 73% finished college in four years, a further 17% finished in 5 years, and 5% finished in less than four years!

As good neighbors we now host the local Methodist congregation in our cafeteria on Sunday. A new sign, donated by an alum, will grace our property between Bedford Park Blvd. and Bainbridge Ave., proudly announcing our location for those not familiar with the school. The walkway between Bainbridge and the school has been replaced, bordered with new evergreens and flowers. The first residents of Fordham Bedford’s affordable housing project, Serviam Gardens, have become our new neighbors. Added to this, we have transitioned to a new uniform for the students that is cheaper for parents, clean in appearance, easier to maintain, and safer for our students on public transportation.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Mount. I thoroughly enjoy meeting our alums in some of the most unlikely places and listening to their stories, as well as their concerns. If there are other issues or topics you would like to see included in Take Note, let us know.

Sincerely,
Fr. John A. Vigilanti, Ed.D.
President
The start of a new calendar year is a magical time for many, as it carries with it a renewed sense of hope and the suggestion of endless possibilities; The New Year's allure is, inevitably, in its implication of a slate wiped clean and a path opened wide to a fresh and better start.

The renewed spirit of which Fr. Vigilanti speaks in his letter is of a similar kind. Such optimism is characteristic of the Mount St. Ursula school community, and is a testament both to its faith and to its tenacity. While the obstacles facing the school, its stakeholders, and the larger community as a whole are indeed many, we simply refuse to accept that they are insurmountable. So we remain flexible. We adapt. Most importantly, we carry on in these tough times with the strength of our varied traditions: our solid, college-preparatory curriculum, our diverse artistic and cultural expressions, and our enduring commitment to leadership and to service, aspects of which are all so vividly described in Father's letter.

When I think of these circumstances in which we currently find ourselves, I am not disheartened. Instead, I am reminded of the words of J. Willard Marriott, a famous American entrepreneur: "Good timber does not grow with ease; the stronger the wind, the stronger the trees." We persevere. We are resilient. We are living proof that, in hard times, the spirit always prevails, and is all the better for having struggled. We thank you all, wholeheartedly, for your past and continued support of our school and its critical mission.

Sincerely,
Lisa A. Harrison
Principal

At the beginning of this school year alumnae and friends attended two special events at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. In October, MSU celebrated its 50th anniversary of the traditional ring day skate. Alumnae from the Class of 1960, who began the tradition, led alums from Poe Park up the Grand Concourse to the school. Approximately 200 alumnae and family members participated in the event for a truly fun day for all!

A little Latin spice was added to our fall fundraiser, Salsa and Chips, in November with the addition of salsa lessons. With the help of the members of the Young Alumnae and Event committees, the Development Office converted the auditorium into an entertaining room of dancing, casino games, a 50/50 raffle (of nearly $6,000 in winnings) and an upbeat ambience for 120 guests. The night raised over $28,000 for MSU! The event was extremely successful because of the enthusiasm of all involved.

Events such as these would not be a success without the participation, generosity and hard work of our dedicated alumnae. It is because of you that MSU is recognized by so many outsiders as one of the most generous all-girl schools in the country. I can verify this since in the eight years I have been here our fundraising has doubled, even tripled some years because of the generosity of the Ursuline Sisters. We must continue this upward trend to keep MSU thriving for future young women who desire an education focusing on Academics, Arts and Service.

Fundraising at Mount St. Ursula continues to be strong. Currently, we are at 75% of our $1.5 million goal, with seven months remaining for the year. Not only is this a very positive beginning, as we are still experiencing a poor economy, but it is a testament to the importance MSU is in the lives of so many. Your support is extremely important! We will be more aggressive in reaching out to foundations this year. Over the next few months I will be working on grants seeking program support and financial aid assistance. We must try to reach out on all levels.

The students here are grateful for all your support. My wish is for a wonderful 2010 for all! If you have any ideas for the Development Office, please feel free to contact me.

Warm Regards,
Anna Ramos
Director
Development/Alumnae Relations
Led by their advisors, Mr. Glenn Stordeur and Ms. Cecilia Granda, and cheered by fellow classmates, faculty and parents, the students rose to the occasion and claimed a team victory for Mount St. Ursula. Kumhyun Song, the team’s alternate member, played a key role in preparing her classmates prior to the competition. She created a power point slide show similar to the one used on the game show and, with fellow seniors Shaella Morales, Stephanie Guaba, Jacquell Barlow and others, challenged the team to a practice session in front of an audience, using a video camera with a host. “It was important to expose the girls to the type of environment they were going to face in a television studio,” noted Ms. Granda. “This was a fun exercise which engaged additional students and made them a part of the experience. It also helped the team overcome their fear of being in front of a live audience and cameras.”

On the day of the shoot, team captain Marian Guerra was confident and fearless, but it was a close race. Throughout the first round, Mount St. Ursula dominated the “Geography” category and St. Barnabas consistently answered the “Musical Instruments” questions. However, Mount St. Ursula took a 25 point lead at the end of the first round by answering the “Get the Picture” question correctly before the buzzer.

Round two was debilitating to the MSU team with a near impossible lightening round category, “The Olympics.” The students had to name the country in which the Olympic games were held with only the season and year as a point of reference. Yet, the MSU team still managed to come out with a five point lead.

In round three, St. Barnabas put up a strong fight, but MSU still came up on top and maintained their five point lead. During the final round, “The Complete 180,” MSU team captain Marian Guerra helped her team increase their lead by correctly answering the first and second question in the “Statistics” category. This was followed by a strong team effort in the “Literature” category. With all three questions answered correctly, MSU was ahead by 45 points, and that is how the game ended. Mount St. Ursula won with a score of 255 and St. Barnabas finished with a score of 210.

The team is preparing for the next round of competition. The shoot date is scheduled for March 4th. The students ask that you keep them in your prayers as they face tougher competition and strive to advance on the show.

"The Challenge is important because it provides our students with a great opportunity to show their abilities to their peers, their community and themselves." ~ Glenn Stordeur

"The Challenge has been such a nerve racking, exhilarating and enriching experience for me. I bonded with my fellow teammates and was also motivated by the rest of the school’s spirit and encouragement." ~ Marian Guerra ‘10

"The Challenge not only allowed me to achieve confidence in my intellectual abilities, but it also allowed me to fully realize the sisterhood that my school educes." ~ Alisha Roman ‘10

To view this episode of “The Challenge” visit our website at www.amsu.org
For the third consecutive year, the Academy of Mount St. Ursula is proud to recognize one of its own, Lucille Watkins ’10, for reaching the status of Semifinalist in the National Achievement Scholarship Program.

“Lucille is a model student,” noted Ms. Harrison. “She is intelligent and articulate, well-mannered and humble. Lucille excels academically, and is always willing to be of service.”

Lucille will now compete with the remaining Semifinalists for the opportunity to receive one of 800 scholarship awards, worth some $2.6 million, to be offered in the spring. The entire Mount St. Ursula community wishes Lucille success as she works toward fulfilling the additional requirements which may advance her to the Finalist level.

If Lucille succeeds to the next round, she will join the ranks of Mount St. Ursula sisters Jerenee Charles ’09 and Courtney Paul ’08.

Honors Assembly

On Thursday, October 1st, the Academy of Mount St. Ursula hosted an evening Honors Assembly to celebrate the various achievements of the student body during the 2008-2009 academic year. For the first time, parents and students were able to share the accomplishments of their daughters and peers.

The night began with the nomination of 25 seniors to the Serviam Chapter of the National Honor Society. Ms. Lisa Harrison, gave awards to all first and second honor students. The following students received the general excellence award: Jacqueline Martinez ’12, Christina Ramos ’11, and Marian Guerra ’10.

Two members of the class of 2010 were recognized as Advanced Placement scholars. Stephanie Guaba and Stephanie Martinez both received a grade of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams. Shaella Morales and Kiara Vega were honored as Advanced Placement Scholars with Honors for receiving an average grade of 3.25 on all exams taken and grades of 3 or higher on four or more exams.

Seventeen students were acknowledged for completing over 50 hours of community service, and two students provided personal insights on their involvement with community and global awareness summer programs.

Shani Ogilvie ’10 participated in a four-week program entitled the Summer Liberation School (SLS). The program provided her with resources to take on various community campaigns focusing on the injustices involving the Black and Latino communities.

Thanks to the International Study Program at the Brotherhood-Sister Sol, Kailani Capote ’10, was one of 12 students chosen to go on a once in a lifetime trip to Brazil. While there, she visited different organizations and communities to study local life, take Portuguese lessons, attend percussion and capoeira classes, and interact with peers.

“As a group, we were able to communicate with youth our own age,” noted Kailani. We broke many stereotypes that they had of us, and vice versa. We shared our style of dancing and dressing, and so did they. We were very fortunate to get a small tour through the Amazon Rainforest, and we actually spent the night on the Amazon River in a boat!”
This past fall our students were privileged to attend an eight-week class at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. These classes expose our students to the immense collection found at the Met and provide equipment and resources which enhance the experience we offer in our Art Academy program. Instructed by their teacher, Mr. Gary Horn, students were challenged to sketch unique stencils inspired by the sculptures and art pieces that populate the galleries of the Met. To aid in this project, students studied the planes of the face using plaster casts and controlled lighting found in the studio at the Met. After the planes study, they applied the knowledge to drawing the idealized sculpture heads in the Roman Gallery. "Knowledge of the planes helped students eliminate the visual conflict caused by multiple light sources in the gallery," noted Mr. Horn. "Also it clarified their knowledge of the structural form of the human head."

Teacher Michael Henry, started a new club this year - The Guitar Club. With a small group of dedicated students, this club has made a significant impact in Mount St. Ursula life. Every Thursday at 3pm in room 305, you can hear the sounds of The Beatles, Go Go’s, Simon and Garfunkle, Green Day and more. The club had its debut performance at the Fordham Prep Acoustic Coffee House. They were also the opening act for International Night. Adding live acoustics to the usual holiday cheer, the group performed at the Rose Hill Apartments Christmas Party and at the MSU Christmas Assembly. The club plans to perform often in 2010 and the entire school community looks forward to hearing the next performance.

MSU Students are exposed to the Best New York Culture & Art

(above) Kumhyun Song ’10 and Angelica Ortiz ’11 sketching at the Met (left) Sketches by Kumhyun Song ’10 and Marianna Evangelista ’10

Students will continue to study at the Met this spring and attend classes in portrait painting.

Kasha Watson ’11, Nicole Smith ’12, Mr. Michael Henry, Lisa Angeles ’12 and Wilmarie Coronado ’10 after their debut performance at the Fordham Prep Acoustic Coffee House
The Academy of Mount St. Ursula is proud to be in its second year of Urban Voices: A Choral Music Initiative with The Metropolitan Opera Guild. To kick-off the year, students participated in a choral exchange with the High School for Leadership & Public Service on the morning of Friday, December 11th. Led by the school music teacher, Ms. Laura Ravotti, and a Guild-trained choral artist Mr. Courtney Carey, the students traveled down to Trinity Place in Manhattan. For some it was their first visit to the historic Trinity Church and Wall Street.

The exchange began with the Mount St. Ursula Urban Voices singers performing a harmonious rendition of "Gloria" and "Angels We Have Heard on High". They continued with a demonstration of a typical rehearsal.

Following the Mount St. Ursula rehearsal, which was filled with rhythmically challenging carols, the newly formed choir from the High School for Leadership and Public Service presented several energetic songs accompanied by student percussion and solos.

"This was a wonderful learning experience for all," noted Ms. Ravotti. "Our girls witnessed the difference confidence and presentation make in their choir, while they learned the importance of pitch and concentration from ours."

The exchange ended with the two choirs joining together to sing "Joy to the World." Additionally, Ms. Ravotti invited the choir to take a trip up to the Bronx to visit the school campus and continue the exchange.

Excited by the dialogue, the students used the experience to prepare for the school wide Christmas Assembly held on Friday, December 18th. The sophomore class, which participates in the Urban Voices program, performed a seamless concert complete with classics such as "Deck the Halls" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." They sang a Spanish carol, "Fum Fum Fum," and challenging songs like "Carol of the Bells" and "Rockin' Jerusalem."

This past December, Mount St. Ursula and the MSG Varsity network became partners. With this new relationship, our students will be provided with the opportunity to experience first hand what it takes to produce television programs. A dedicated professional production staff member from MSG Varsity will mentor a small group of students in creating online, interactive and television content. Additionally the network will provide the school with video equipment and two $1,000 scholarships for a graduating senior. The student produced work will be broadcast on the MSG Varsity channel and online. A special thanks to faculty member, Mr. Joseph Antonelli, for stepping up to the plate and moderating this new extra-curricular activity. "The MSG Varsity Club represents an opportunity for the girls to document life at MSU" noted Mr. Antonelli. "It also fosters creativity allowing students to decide which media best depicts the school and our unique message. Lastly, this partnership will increase public awareness of our community at Ursula." Within days the student members received equipment and were already filming. If you are an Optimum subscriber you may view their first project - a video of our Christmas Assembly - online at: www.msgvarsity.com

Good luck to the founding members: Cristi Benn ’10, Brianna Bines ’13, Nicole Bonds ’10, Nicole-Ashley Carumba ’12, Sabrina Cedeno ’10, Ariel Norfleet ’10, Shanice Gilchrist ’10, Scarlet Gomez ’12, Justine Hunt ’10, Alvilia Pemberton ’11, Karina Ramirez ’12 and Danielle White ’10
Throughout the year, our students have united to make a positive difference in the school, in our community and in the world.

Beginning on Sunday, October 4th, a group of students led by Ms. Katherine Corticco participated in the annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund Walk to Cure at the Bronx Zoo. Jadiya Chuzan ’12, Ened Frederick ’12, Shaniee Gilchrist ’10, Tasha Taylor ’13, Kayla Torres ’13 and Dana Woodstock ’13 signed up to support the team: Gabriel’s Hope. Along with MSU alumnus and friends, the group raised over $400.

In addition to supporting the JDR Fund, MSU juniors named Wednesday, October 21st, Pink Day at Mount St. Ursula. The school raised over $350 for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Foundation.

The month of October ended with a candy drive for homeless children. This fundraiser was run by the members of That’s Life. The following students: Taylor Sumpter ’10, Lisa Marie Alicea ’10, Jacquell Barlow ’10, Angelica Ortiz ’11, Kiara Jenkins ’11 and Hanna Shaikh ’11 collected over 50 bags and 3 cartons of candy. The goodies were donated on Friday, October 30th to Part of the Solution (POTS) for distribution to the homeless children on Halloween.

Continuing in the spirit of giving, Mount St. Ursula students and faculty rolled up their sleeves for the 3rd annual fall blood drive hosted by the Office of Development/Alumnae Relations in conjunction with the New York Blood Center on Tuesday, November 10th. Over 50 students, faculty and staff members participated in the drive. Thirty pints of blood were donated. This drive alone provided local hospitals and trauma centers with the resources needed to save up to 90 lives.

While groups of students were making a difference in our local community, a group of seniors - Adeola Okoduwa, Lucitania Hernandez, Shani Ogilvie and Kunyhun Song - participated in a United Nations conference whose goals affect the lives of girls world wide. The conference was sponsored by the UN Working Group on Girls (WGG). The WGG promotes the institutionalization of the rights of girls within the United Nations system in order to ensure that the UN takes a holistic approach to girls’ issues and that UN policies and programs assist girls to develop their full potential. One senior, Adeola Okoduwa, was given the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion at the B’hai Center at the United Nations. The panel was asked to share from their own personal experiences how individuals can make an impact fighting social injustices through community service. “I was nervous and proud at the same time,” noted Adeola. “I had to share my own personal experiences in front of a room filled with international leaders, but it helped me reflect on my accomplishments and I will never forget this opportunity.”

On Friday, November 20, eleven members of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula’s National Honor Society attended the 20th Anniversary Conference on the Rights of the Child. This meeting took place in the Trusteeship Council Chamber of the United Nations. The meeting began with opening speeches by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, President of the UNICEF Executive Board, H.E. Mr. Omar Daou, and UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman. The speakers reviewed what the UN has accomplished over the past 20 years concerning the rights of the child. The program continued with three young adults (ages 16-18) from Brazil, Pakistan, and Nigeria who presented their testimonials surrounding the issues they face in their own countries - poor education, human trafficking, natural disasters and police brutality.

Following these presentations was a group discussion moderated by UNICEF’s Executive Director, Ann Veneman. On the panel were six participants, Emilio Garcia Mendez, Nyaradzayi Gubonzvanda, Archbishop Felix Machado (a champion of inter-religious dialogue), Iona Maria Barbu (20 year-old young woman from Romania), Jeroo Billamoria (an Egyptian female speaker from Child Helpline) and Timothy Shriver (chairperson of Special Olympics). This section of the day centered on the current and future plans of the UN to promote the rights of a child.

The following seniors from Mount St. Ursula attended: Katherine Chung, Andeisha Carbon, Adeola Okoduwa, Kiara Vega, Jacquell Barlow, Marian Guerra, Shaella Morales, Stephanie Guaba, Samantha Rivera, Mary Carino, and Lucille Watkins. Upon returning to the school, the students were determined to convey what they had witnessed.

The students held a school wide assembly on Monday, December 7, focused on the issue of human trafficking. During the assembly, the students prepared a presentation that included heart wrenching images, bone chilling testimonials and staggering statistics. The students shared the stories of young victims from Uganda, Venezuela, Brazil and Kenya. They shared the viewpoints of UN members by replicating the panel discussion they witnessed at the council. Samantha Rivera ’10 added an inspiring mix to the panel by representing the views of the National Honor Society. Samantha and her classmates eloquently expressed their plan to engage the school community, raise awareness and make a difference. Following the assembly, they plan to collaborate with students from Mount St. Michael to further raise awareness within the Bronx community.

“Looking back, I realize that my education has led me to all of my accomplishments in life. It has opened so many opportunities that will guide me to a great future. Knowing that there are young women like me who cannot share in my educational opportunities, inspires me to seek out some type of solution, that will give all young women the same mind set that I have.”

~ Adeola Okoduwa ’10
As former principal, honorary alumna, and current Spanish teacher of Mount St. Ursula, Sr. Barbara has made her mark. A Bronx native and one of nine children, Sr. Barbara graduated from St. Philip Neri School and later went on to graduate from St. Barnabas High School. She entered the Ursuline order in 1957 and was committed to family, religion, the Ursulines and most of all to education. She completed her B.S. in Spanish at the College of New Rochelle in 1961 and began her long career as an educator and role model. Her first teaching experience was at Blessed Sacrament School in New Rochelle, followed by St. Angela’s and Our Lady of Mercy parochial schools in the Bronx. All along she continued her own education and obtained an M.A. in Spanish from Fordham University in 1969 and a diploma from the Dante Centro in Florence, Italy in 1973.

In 1970, Sr. Barbara began teaching foreign language and religion at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. She went on to become the school principal in 1981 and led the school through a Middle States Re-Accreditation process. Additionally, the school received the U.S. Department of Education’s Award for Excellence under her tenure in 1987. She has served on the Ursuline Provincial Council, the Board of Trustees of Fordham Preparatory School, the Trusteeship Committee of the Ursuline Eastern Province and her chairperson for several Middle States evaluating committees. She is currently on the board of St. Barnabas Hospital.

In 1991, the Board of Trustees conferred the status of “Honorary Graduate of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula” and welcomed her into the Hall of Fame.

In 1992 she left Mount St. Ursula and headed the National Office for Ursuline Education Services at the College of New Rochelle. This connection to the network of all North American Ursuline High Schools made her even more committed when she returned to educating the young women of the Bronx. More specifically, she has dedicated her life to the education of well rounded young women with a diverse background, a love of learning, and the desire to succeed. Sr. Barbara currently teaches Spanish at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. She developed a new program at the school to encourage students with the potential for leadership to serve the school and surrounding community called the Serviam Leaders program.

“Sr. Barbara is a natural born leader who unselfishly dedicates her time and energies to serve the Mount St. Ursula community. She is a living example of the spirit of St. Angela.”

~ Mrs. Monica DeLaurentis ’70

“Our school community congratulates our only full time Ursuline, Sr. Barbara Calamari, on her 50th anniversary as an Ursuline and for her unwavering dedication and years of service to MSU!”

~ Fr. John Vigilanti

Sr. Barbara’s vision, creativity, sense of humor and incredible energy have inspired thousands of students whose lives she has enriched. More remarkable is the fact that she remembers each and every one of her students and the struggles and accomplishments they encountered.

“It has been an inspiration to work with Sr. Barbara and to witness her genuine concern for every student, every family and the individual accomplishments of each. Every June she describes precisely the spirit of the graduating class, appreciating the many nuances of character that make them unique. She seems to remember each person and all the details even after the passage of time.”

~ Sr. Alice Marie Giordano, osu ’52

On Saturday, September 12th, Sr. Barbara Calamari, osu celebrated her 50th anniversary as an Ursuline. Over 100 members of the Mount St. Ursula community, Ursulines, family members and friends gathered in the school chapel to honor her dedicated service and accomplishments.

"Sr. Barbara is a natural born leader who unselfishly dedicates her time and energies to serve the Mount St. Ursula community. She is a living example of the spirit of St. Angela.”

~ Mrs. Monica DeLaurentis ’70

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Sr. Barbara’s vision, creativity, sense of humor and incredible energy have inspired thousands of students whose lives she has enriched. More remarkable is the fact that she remembers each and every one of her students and the struggles and accomplishments they encountered.
On Saturday, October 17th over 200 alumnae and their families and friends gathered at Poe Park to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ring day skate. As they relived this unique MSU experience, members of the class of 1960 led the group up the Grand Concourse and down the 199th Street hill to the school.

“So many happy memories were brought to mind from being in the school again and 50 years just slipped away... I so enjoyed being part of this special event.”

~ Claire Skoglund ’60

Alumnae traveled from across the country to skate, walk, stroll and relive their ring day skate. As they entered the halls which were once a second home for so many, alumnae were greeted by current students, faculty and administrators. The students were dedicated to ensuring that this celebration be just as memorable as their first! Students volunteered to face paint and sell balloons, ring pops, and commemorative memorabilia. The Umoja Dare Steppers gave an exhilarating performance filled with passion and heart, an example of why all MSU alumnae feel pride and continue to be inspired.

A formal program was prepared with images of ring days past and a special recognition of the Class of 1960 for creating a tradition that has transformed ring day forever. Blue ribbons were distributed by members of the Young Alumnae Committee - once a symbol of school spirit at Mount St. Ursula - now used as a reminder of the memories cherished.
Friday, November 6th was anything but a regular night at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula . . .

The school auditorium was decorated to the nines as guests enjoyed a night filled with casino games and salsa dancing. Over 120 alumnae, board members, Ursulines, friends and parents attended this special event which raised over $28,000 for the school. "There is no doubt that this event is a reminder that alumnae and friends of Mount St. Ursula consider our school a true treasure in the Bronx," noted Fr. John Vigilanti. "And we will continue to fulfill the mission it has had for 155 years: educating young women in academics, arts, and service."

Guests played roulette and black jack, danced salsa, and tried their luck on the slot machines. Former math teacher Omar Ayala and alumna Kelly Grande ’09, returned to the school to perform an exciting salsa routine with current students, AnnLady Jorge ’12, Mariana Pinos ’12, Aleysha Taveras ’12 and Dominique Vazquez ’12. They also offered salsa lessons throughout the evening.

In addition to the games and dancing, alumna Mariann McEvoy ’59 was announced as the winner of the 50/50 raffle and over 30 Chinese auction prizes were awarded by the end of the night. Prizes ranged from a newly refurbished electric guitar and guitar lessons, i-pods, a Coach bag and Yankees and Mets field box tickets.

Fr. Vigilanti and Kerri Gould Reynolds ’86, led the room in a live auction for notable prizes. Backstage passes to see Ugly Betty and meet Vanessa Williams, skybox tickets to see the Knicks at Madison Square Garden, a week stay at a beautiful home in Rhode Island and a romantic weekend at Sagamore Island.

“Events such as Salsa and Chips bring the Mount St. Ursula community together for a great cause!”

~ Anna Ramos
One of the first school wide events sponsored by Student Council was a very successful Halloween party. One hundred fifty students and fifteen faculty/staff members attended this afternoon of fun and creativity! Students came dressed in costumes ranging from superheroes to presidents and faculty/staff members dressed up as Alice in Wonderland characters. Additionally, the stage was converted into a haunted house. Any student who wished to enter was greeted by the “phantom of the opera,” played by Ms. DiBenedetto, head of the musical theater program.

On November 20th, students shined behind the microphone, on the dance floor, and in mini comedies. One notable performance was produced by the Classics Club which created a modern interpretation of the story of Persephone and Hades. The audience laughed as the students performed a “dance-off” to the Michael Jackson hit “Thriller.” The evening came to a climactic ending with a flawless performance by the MSU Umoja Dare Steppers. The student choreographed routine lasted almost 15 minutes and had the audience sitting at the edge of their seats.

MSU held its first Thanksgiving dinner on November 23rd. The dinner was organized by the members of That’s Life. Students, faculty and their families, staff and alumnae were in attendance. The group hopes to continue this event as an opportunity to unify the MSU family and spread a sense of gratitude for the abundant gifts the Lord bestows on us all.

Rose Hill Apartments was filled with the spirit and love that Christmas brings when the members of Finishing Touches, Guitar Club, National Honor Society and Spanish Club hosted a Christmas Party filled with carols, games and Christmas cheer!
Looking ahead in 2010

Thank you for your participation

The Office of Development/Alumnae Relations would like to thank everyone who participated in the Lord & Taylor Benefit Bash on Thursday, November 12th at the Eastchester Lord & Taylor. If you sold or bought coupons or shopped and used our coupon on the 12th; you helped MSU raise $1,165. We look forward to participating in this fundraiser next fall and we hope you will join us again.

Special Matinee Performance

SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2010
LUNCHEON AT 12:30 PM
CURTAIN OPENS AT 2:00 PM
TICKETS $25.00

Grease

PLEASE RSVP BY FRIDAY, APRIL 2nd
AND MAIL TO THE ADDRESS BELOW
or MAKE RESERVATIONS ON-LINE at WWW.AMSU.ORG

___ I/We would like to attend the luncheon and special performance of “Grease” on Sunday, April 18th. Please reserve ______ tickets at $25.00 each. Enclosed is a check for $______
(Payable to: Academy of Mount St. Ursula)

___ I/We would like to help underwrite this production. Enclosed is my contribution in the amount of $______
(Payable to: Academy of Mount St. Ursula)

___ I/We will not be able to attend, enclosed is my contribution $______
(Payable to: Academy of Mount St. Ursula)

Credit Card # __________________________ Signature _____________________
Exp. ________

Program Ads
___ I/We would like to purchase an ad in the program. Complete the form below and return with the required fee and a typed copy of the ad or a business card. You may also email the ad to alumnae@amsu.org. (Ad deadline is Friday, March 26, 2010.)

Prices:
___ Back outside cover (color) - $250.00
___ Back inside cover (color) - $150.00
___ Full page - $75.00
___ Half page - $40.00
___ Quarter page - $25.00
___ 2 line booster - $15.00

Name of person/business purchasing the ad:
____________________________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________________
City _____________________________ State_____ Zip___________
Phone: ____________________________________________________
E-Mail: ____________________________________________________
Total Amount Enclosed by check $__________________________
(Payable to: Academy of Mount St. Ursula)
Credit Card # __________________________ Signature _____________________
Exp. ________

2nd Annual Cinco de Mayo The Magic of Five Raffle Drawing

May 5, 2010

Look for our mailing in March

You have to be “In It to Win It!”

2nd Annual Cinco de Mayo
The Magic of Five
Raffle Drawing

May 5, 2010

Look for our mailing in March

You have to be “In It to Win It!”

155th Anniversary Celebration Fall 2010

More information to follow
1952

Dr. Elynore Clark Cucinell met Fr. John Vigilanti this past summer while he was on tour in Hawaii. She currently works at the VA Hospital in Honolulu as a consulting neurologist.

1954

Maryellen Keefe, OSU, Ph. D., celebrated her golden jubilee as an Ursuline on August 6, 2009. She taught English and Religion at MSU from 1968-1970 and 1976-1977. Maryellen was moderator of the yearbook and in charge of the bookstore. She also started the Medieval Banquet in the fall of ’76.

After three years teaching at Ursuline Academy in Bethesda, MD, Maryellen spent a year in Rome on tertianship. Upon her return, she taught English at secondary schools in New Rochelle and Rye before moving on to Iona College and earning a doctorate in English at the University of Delaware. Currently, Maryellen teaches in the Humanities department at SUNY Maritime College and is moderator of the Newman Club.

1961

Sr. Loretta O’Reilly, SJH would like to get in touch with her classmates from the class of 1961. You can e-mail her at sisterloretta@sistersofjesusourhope.org. She looks forward to hearing from you!

1965

Dr. Carol Ivory was recently appointed Associate Dean for Curriculum and Instruction at the College of Liberal Arts in Washington State University. For the last six years she has served as department chair in the Fine Arts department. Her research focuses on the art, history and culture of the Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia.

1976


1977

Margaret King has been a police officer with the Nassau County Police Department for 16 years. On June 26, 2009 she was promoted to the rank of police sergeant and has the honor of wearing the same shield number as her late brother Sgt. Thomas J. King. Margaret is currently assigned to prisoner processing.

Correction: There was an error on page 8 of our Summer 2009 issue. Under the first photo caption on the top, left hand corner it should read Christina Moran ’11 not Cristina Ramos ’11. We apologize for the confusion.

1978

Justice Dianne T. Renwick of the Appellate Division, First Department, has been appointed chairwoman of the New York State Continuing Legal Education Committee. Justice Renwick, who was appointed to the First Department in April, began her career as a lawyer in the criminal division of the Legal Aid Society in the Bronx and was first appointed to the bench in 1997 as a Housing Court judge. She was elected to the Bronx Civil Court later that year and to the Supreme Court in 2001.

1979

Lee Llambelis, Esq. alongside Judge Sonia Sotomayor on the day of her confirmation to the U.S. Supreme Court on August 7, 2009.

Lee was recently promoted to serve as Special Assistant District Attorney for Community Affairs. Before her appointment, she was Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo. She also served as Litigation Director for the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund where she engaged in litigation, advocacy and policy development on Civil Rights issues affecting Latinos nationwide.

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1984

Elizabeth Stephens Gargano would like to update fellow Mounties on the birth of her first child, Joseph John Gargano, born on October 21, 2008. She graduated from the MSU along with her three sisters Michele Stephens Granda ’82, Jeanne Stephens Diachok ’84, and Margaret Stephens Tompkins ’85. Elizabeth and her husband Bruno are ecstatic over their wonderful and long awaited blessing.

1990

Melissabel Vicente Nelson and her husband Shawn are happy to announce the birth of a new baby girl, Gloria Elizabeth, born April 21, 2009. She joins her big sister Raquel Sierra.

1991

Josephine (JoEllen) Clark received her Masters degree in Elementary Studies from Wilmington University in 2006. She currently teaches Language Arts and math at Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Wilmington, DE.

1992

Elizabeth Mazzella Varenne and her husband David welcomed their third child on September 4, 2009. Henry Francis joins big brother and sister Charlie and Maggie.

1997


Yu, who played fifth singles as a walk-on at Manhattan College, aspired to a career in tennis or sportscasting when she was 13. Her sports television appetite was whetted by Len Berman, Tom McDonald, Bonnie Bernstein and current SNY colleague Gary Apple.

“I think it’s great for minority women to be represented on SportsNite,” Yu said. “I think I’m the first Asian female sports anchor in New York City. I guess there’s a lot of pressure on me. I try not to think of it.”

1999

Amy Malave Dodwell and husband William welcomed William Patrick born on November 18, 2009 weighing 7lbs. 12oz. and measuring 21 1/4 in.

2003

Christine Grimaldi daughter of MSU staff member Gladys Grimaldi and retired Con Edison District Manager, Tom Grimaldi, started working for Con Edison in 2007 as a Customer Service Representative. Within the last year, she transferred to their Energy Services Department as an Administrative Clerk and was most recently promoted to Office Assistant within the department.
Parents of Alumnae: If your daughter no longer lives at this address, please contact the Office of Development/Alumnae Relations with her new address. If you would like to remain on our mailing list, please let us know.