Dear Alumnae and Friends,

As I write this, the coldest days of winter have arrived. Did we really think we could escape the cold? On Tuesday, January 22nd the archdiocese issued a press release announcing the finalized list of Catholic parish grammar schools that will close at the end of this academic year. The hardest hit area of the Archdiocese will be the Bronx. Since a number of these targeted schools are our feeder schools, we are constantly vigilant of the ramifications on our school and other Catholic high schools in the area.

Our input into this archdiocesan decision-making process has not been solicited, even though the impact on us will be tangible. As a consequence, the administration at AMSU has striven to be one step ahead of any seismic shift in the archdiocese. We have sent out 315 acceptance letters to Catholic and public 8th grade students based on their performance on the TACHS (entrance) exam in November. It is our desire to expand our academic footprint with a new program: Students and Teachers Aspiring and Reaching (STAR) embracing 25 students whom, we believe, will benefit from a more intensive and extended program of instruction in the Ursuline tradition. This cohort will be in addition to the normal admission procedures and the 25 full academic scholarships and 15 partial academic scholarships we are making available to qualified students.

As you read this edition of Take Note and see what is taking place here at AMSU, you will understand why we are making every effort to offer a new generation of young women the gifts AMSU possesses in Academics, Arts, and Service. We are committed to keeping this wonderful tradition as an option for families looking to provide their daughters with a solid academic foundation, a sense of service, and a self-image which radiates confidence and accomplishment. Please feel free to communicate with me or other members of the administration. As always, you are most welcome to visit the school if you are in the neighborhood. Thank you for your interest and support in your alma mater.

Sincerely,

Fr. John A. Vigilanti, Ed.D.
President
Message from the Executive Director

“I have a far greater appreciation of the countless acts of giving I have witnessed all my life and sometimes have taken for granted. And it has convinced me that almost everyone—regardless of income, available time, age and skills—can do something useful for others and, in the process, strengthen the fabric of our shared humanity.” – Bill Clinton

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The Academy of Mount St. Ursula has by far some of the most dedicated, generous, and caring alumnae. It is a fact! A few years ago when AMSU was working with a consulting agency, pro bono, they said AMSU had the most generous alumnae for an all-girls’ high school in the country. When I look at annual reports from other schools in the area and see their participation and contributions, nothing compares to the “girls of Mount St. Ursula!”

Some examples of how alumnae are generous with their time: In January a retired English teacher from the Class of 1960 contacted me to say she was very interested in working with AMSU students on their writing skills. She has not been back to the school since she graduated, but is so impressed with what she reads in Take Note, that she decided she wanted to give back. At this year’s young alumnae reunion, an alumna from the Class of 2001 was the keynote speaker to recent AMSU grads about her career, passion for acting and never giving up on her dreams. She was so excited to be back at AMSU that she said she would like to be involved in other areas.

As Fr. John has mentioned, we are embarking on a Capital Campaign in honor of AMSU’s upcoming 160th anniversary in 2015. A development committee is working on the Ensuring Their Future campaign and we are looking for volunteers to work in certain areas. If you are interested in helping out, please contact me so I can provide you with more information. Whatever you are able to do to help would be truly appreciated. We hope everyone will consider participating in some way to make this campaign a huge success!

My hope is that you continue to give, or may now decide to join others in supporting AMSU. Everyone can give or do something to strengthen the community of a very worthy cause, the women of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, where the future leaders of our society continue to be educated!

Warm Regards,

Anna Parra Ramos
Executive Director of Development

Letter from the Principal

Dear Parents and Alumnae,

Despite the still lingering and very much dispiriting climate surrounding Catholic school education in NYC as described by Fr. Viglianti in his introductory letter, I think you will find the mélange of activities and initiatives described in this issue of Take Note to be uplifting. AMSU continues to thrive in the face of school closures, by heeding St. Angela’s advice that encourages us to “put [our] whole soul[s] into the enterprise we have undertaken,” and, ultimately, “to rejoice!” Why would we do anything other than this? To what end would AMSU, its students, and stakeholders benefit if we failed to invest ourselves wholly and completely in fulfilling the Ursuline mission?

This year I have been particularly energized by two new initiatives recently begun at AMSU. The first is actually less new than renewed: AMSU has cheerleaders once again! Thanks to the courage, leadership, and maturity demonstrated by senior Shannon Qualls and sophomore Jai Hundley Addison in their proposal to revive the team, as well as the talent and commitment of alumna and cheerleading coach Carla Lide ’05, AMSU’s basketball team feels better supported on the court, and the school as a whole benefits from the pep, spirit, and cheer that the team brings.

The second initiative of note outlines our continued technological advances. New developments in this area include a higher-speed Internet connection, 10 brand new networked computers for student use in the library media center, and iPad minis, courtesy of REACH, that have begun to make an appearance in selected English classes. Additionally, we have become more creative in our efforts to communicate with our constituency, by reaching out in ways that are better and more easily received: via text messages and Facebook! I encourage you all to check out the new student-centered AMSU Facebook page, to keep current with the daily happenings at AMSU. Thank you, as always, for your support and interest.

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Lisa A. Harrison
Principal

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Warm Regards,

Anna Parra Ramos
Executive Director of Development
FIRST SEMESTER GRADES
EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Congratulations to the following students who achieved First and Second in Excellence in their respective classes for the first semester of this academic year:

Grade 9: First in Excellence: Delia Cruz
           Second in Excellence: Cinthia Ibarra

Grade 10: First in Excellence: Karla Ortiz
           Second in Excellence: Stephanie Singh

Grade 11: First in Excellence: Caitlin Harrison
           Second in Excellence: Arianne Caloobanan

Grade 12: First in Excellence: Sandra Tsikor
           Second in Excellence: Kejana Ayala

ALUMNA DONATES FUNDS FOR KAPLAN SAT PREP

Board Member and AMSU Alumna Anne Marie Hynes will be funding a Kaplan SAT Test Prep Program for 25 students at AMSU. The program will be offered to students of the junior class who have an 85% or greater average. Students who apply themselves to the program should be able to score higher on the SAT and will be more likely to receive scholarships. The program will consist of six three-hour classes. The 25 eligible students will meet after school for six weeks from 2:30pm to 5:30pm. At the end of the six weeks a total of four full length practice exams will be scheduled on Saturdays at Fordham University.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

AMSU HIGH SPEED INTERNET ACCESS

AMSU upgraded its Internet connection in December 2012. The increase in internet bandwidth was a relief, enabling faculty and students the ability to access information more efficiently.

ADDITIONAL N-COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Ncomputing allows the school to use a computer monitor and single unit minicomputer to gain access to software applications on the school network. AMSU has a significant reduction in hardware cost, software administration, power consumption and head production because of these systems. Since today’s microprocessors are far more powerful than most people ever use, sharing this power among multiple users is cost effective.
Academic Achievements

Library Media Center Enhancements

New Computer Lab

Ten new computers have been installed in the library media center for student use. Six of the ten computers are located in the former storage space adjacent to the library. Having the additional computers helps facilitate the technology demands.

Increase in Book Usage

The Library Media Center has shown a significant increase in book check-outs. About 88% more books are being accessed every month on average. Database usage such as Facts on File and Gale are being used more frequently. The goal is to get students used to searching major databases so that it is easier for them as they enter college. As technological trends arise it is the Library Media Center’s mission to implement these tools to better serve the AMSU student body.

Benefits of Smartboard Technology

The hard work and dedication of our teachers has been the key to the success of AMSU. All of our classrooms now have Smartboard Technology which enables teachers to expand the possibilities of what they can achieve in the classroom including access to a multitude of online tools and videos, the ability to highlight sections on webpages for discussion, and to search databases online. A teacher can also customize hotkeys for quick access. In photo on the right, AMSU’s Service Coordinator, Sr. Alice Marie Giordano, O.S.U. ’52 utilizes the Smartboard for presentations.
The Arts

AMSU FINE ART PROJECTS

SENIOR PROJECT
Art Academy senior Jasmine Constantino is working on her requirement of creating a religious drawing for the school's permanent collection. As seen above, Jasmine's illustration is a representation of the entombment of Jesus Christ.

GUITAR SCULPTURES
The studio art classes began construction with drawings of guitars; low relief constructions followed by cubist form guitar sculptures prior to building the artwork to current scale. This year Aria Feliciano has been working on an art sculpture project which reflects the guitar sculptures in a large scale. Aria and other AMSU students have been working on the sculpture adding additional color, textures. Finishing touches are in the process of being made prior to presenting the piece to the school.

BLOCK PRINTS
The AMSU Studio Artists are working on religious subject block prints to become part of the school's permanent collection. They will be displayed throughout the school. The subjects of the prints are various notable moments and events in Jesus' life. Students are creating linoleum block prints that will be framed and put on display. The linoleum block is carefully prepared as a relief matrix; which means the areas to show ‘white’ are cut away with a cutter leaving the image to show ‘black’ at the original surface level. It is only necessary to ink the block and bring it into firm and even contact with the paper or cloth to achieve an acceptable print. The result would, of course, print “in reverse” or mirror-image. This project is both a learning process and a service activity that provides our school with quality images and works of art. This helps to define our school as a Catholic institution that is committed to service.

AMSU MUSIC PROGRAM
BRINGING UNITY FROM DIVERSITY

The AMSU music program is alive and well! The AMSU Vocalists have grown by many members and are happy to have a large group of underclassmen this year. The theme of this year’s Christmas concert was “He is Born: Traditional Christmas Music from all Over the World.” The show featured traditional Christmas music from Germany, Spain, France, and England, as well as a traditional African American spirituals. The students enjoyed performing Christmas music from other cultures and are looking forward to new selections at the spring concert on Thursday, May 9.
JUILLIARD INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM
A MUSIC EDUCATION ADVANTAGE

The Juilliard Program’s focus of instruction this year is on the flute and clarinet. Juilliard teachers Anna Brumbaugh and Nicholas Johnson have done a wonderful job instructing and inspiring their students to learn and grow as musicians. Although learning a brand new instrument is a very difficult task, both classes were able to perform classic favorites in the Christmas concert with confidence. Brava!

Photo on left is of Samiha Rahman ’14

INTERNATIONAL NIGHT
HE WANTS IT ALL

On Friday, November 16th, 2012 AMSU celebrated its 30th Annual International Night. The Academy of Mount St. Ursula values a well-rounded education and provides students with various opportunities to express their artistic creativity. AMSU has a multitude of diverse cultures represented in the student body. The 2012 International Night had Latin, Indian, and Albanian dance performances by the Dance Club, Spanish Club, and Asian Club. Students from the music department and guitar club performed Solo Por Un Beso, Kwabena Kwabena, Por Amor, Can’t Give Up Now, and a Gospel Song. Other performances included a solo vocal performance, spoken word, acting, and a cultural (FAB) Fashion Against Bullying show. The Umoja Dare Steppers finished off the night with an amazing syncopated rhythmic dance. A collection at the door was made from those who were able, to donate to those affected by Hurricane Sandy. Student in photograph below is LaShaun Lewis ’13 singing a Gospel Song.

HOLIDAY OPEN MIC
LIKE MY MOTHER DOES

Open Mics this year have seen an elevated level of performances. There are more musicians and students stepping up to the microphone who have never performed before. Senior Karina Rivera sang “Like My Mother Does” with great emotion. Karina dedicated the song to her mother. This was Karina’s first public performance. When asked why she had waited until senior year to perform Karina stated that “the moment was just right.” “As more students are asking to perform we are looking to possibly add more Open Mics,” said Mr. Henry. Several members of the guitar club also showed off their talents in various musical performances. Ms. Jeanne DiBenedetto also donated her time and talent to support the student performances.
FR. JOHN VISITS LEPER COLONY
MOLOKAI

Last July, while on military duty in Honolulu, Fr. Vigilanti received special permission from the state of Hawaii to fly directly to the leper colony at Kalaupapa on the island of Molokai (the highest sea cliffs in the world), roughly 45 minutes by air from Honolulu. The majority of visitors to Kalaupapa are required to land at the Molokai airport and be transported to the leper colony by the only officially recognized tour operator. However, since Fr. Vigilanti was on official duty for a limited time at Tripler Army Medical Center, and since he had available a small Piper Cherokee plane, flight instructor, and an Episcopal army chaplain, an exception was made to fly directly to Kalaupapa and be hosted by the newly arrived chaplain, Fr. Patrick Killilea. St. Damien deVeuster and St. Marianne Cope (canonized this past October) devoted their lives to comforting those stricken with Hansen’s disease during the 19th century. The official segregation of lepers ended in 1969. Eight thousand lepers lived and died at Kalaupapa. At present only 17 lepers choose to remain, five of them Catholic. What made the trip unique and memorable was that Fr. Vigilanti actually flew the plane to Kalaupapa, having taken a previous flying lesson on July 4th. Fr. John prepared a slide show for presentation to the students.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
OCTOBER 2012

Each year the athletics department, along with the girls of AMSU, participate in the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. NBCAM recognizes that, although many great strides have been made in breast cancer awareness and treatment, there remains much to be accomplished. Today, we remain dedicated to educating and empowering women to take charge of their own breast health. The National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) is a collaboration of national public service organizations, professional medical associations, and government agencies working together to promote breast cancer awareness, share information on the disease, and provide greater access to services.

AMSU SERVIAM RECOGNITION
SERVICE AWARDS

During the 2013 Honors Assembly, the AMSU student body was recognized for excellence in service. The following students have performed fifty or more hours of community service: Kejana Ayala, Sorinil Barea, Victoria Barreto, Enid Cordero, Maya Davila, Asia Epps-Forrest, Keisy Germosen, Caitlyn Harrison, Christine Lopez, Harini Maragh, Vedawattie Maraj, Jordan Morales, Ariel Nieves, Ayme Roa, Michelle Rojas, and Kayla Serrano. Bushra Begum and Melissa Vargas are recognized for performing one hundred or more hours of community service. The Academy of Mount St. Ursula serviam motto continues to play a significant role in the lives of the students. Aside from fulfilling required service hours, students are going above and beyond in a genuine way.
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL
UN CENTER FOR THE SALVATION ARMY

On October 11th, the first International Day of the Girl, senior Peace Aisogun represented the Working Group on Girls, a Committee of the UN, on a panel at the UN Center for the Salvation Army. Peace wrote and presented a dramatic spoken word, bringing to life the plight of girls who are victims of human trafficking. She shared the stage with a high level representative of Unicef, and David Arkless, head of Manpower. Junior Anita Benn has been chosen to become a Girl Advocate for The Working Group on Girls. She will be trained to speak about the needs of girls throughout the world at different events. She will collaborate with others on planning girl friendly activities during the two-week long Convention on the Status of Women, a meeting that will host girls from many other countries.

HURRICANE SANDY DISASTER RELIEF

The aftermath of Hurricane Sandy is a devastatingly tragic scene. Countless numbers of men, women, children, and animals throughout the Mid Atlantic Region and Eastern United States have been affected. Some of the positive results from the hurricane were the way people joined together to support one another in this time of need. At AMSU, Student Council members spearheaded efforts to help support the victims. Money was raised during AMSU’s 30th Annual International Night and Spirit Week. Students competed to see which class could raise the most money and bring in the most coats. The Junior Class won the competition. A total of $450 was raised and donated to Catholic Charities.

FRESHMEN JUNIOR PICNIC

Weather permitting, each year the junior and freshman classes hold a picnic on the AMSU lawn. Faculty and staff join in the celebration by providing music and entertainment during the picnic. The purpose of the picnic is to connect the sisters and to fully welcome the freshman class to AMSU. This year the weather was beautiful. AMSU physical education teacher, Lisa Manetta brought her iPod and Student Affairs Coordinator, Jeanne DiBenedetto hooked it up to a portable PA system. The students quickly organized a line dancing party on the lawn and the comraderie was instant. The picnic was a perfect launch for many lasting relationships.
SPORTS

AMSU VOLLEYBALL TEAM
CHAMPION PLAYERS

The 2012 AMSU Volleyball Team made it to the semifinals. “The girls made a valiant effort to make it to the championship round,” said coach Ruth Taveras. The team has been undefeated all season and received a “BYE” (advance without playing an actual game) for the first round of playoffs (the quarterfinals). The Archdiocese of New York honored the team for their efforts. The AMSU Volleyball team will receive a plaque for being the 2012 Bronx/Westchester B Division Champions. Visit the Volleyball webpage at www.amsu.org under the athletics tab in the main navigation or http://www.edline.net/pages/Academy_of_Mount_St_Ursula/Athletics/Volleyball for more information.

LADY BEARS BASKETBALL
DOMINATING THE COURTS

Coach Tara Harrison ’07 has done an outstanding job in motivating the basketball team at AMSU. Helpful Hoops, an on-line training resource, may have added strength and motivation to the player’s warmups, but it was their hard work and dedication to the game that gave them the results. AMSU’s most recent game against St. Raymond was a complete blowout. The final score was 64 AMSU to 30 St. Raymond. The AMSU Cheer Team, as well as a crowd of students, participated in rooting for the Lady Bears who made it to the playoffs! The team did not win the championship but made a valiant effort.

PEP RALLY
CHEERING IN ONE SPIRIT

On December 14th during “Spirit Week” the entire school joined in a pep rally celebration cheering on the upcoming sport events. The purpose of this gathering was to encourage school spirit and to support members of the teams. The pep rally was loud and had a lot of enthusiasm to keep the students excited for the upcoming games and to cheer on the basketball team. During the pep rally, performances included the Cheer Team founded by (captain) senior Shannon Qualls and (co-captain) sophomore Jai Hundley-Addison, and a rhythmic dance by the Umoja Dare Step Team.
**UMOJA DARE STEP TEAM**

The Umoja Dare Step Team kicked off the school year with their energetic and lively jungle-themed International Night Performance, hyped up the crowd at the annual Pep Rally, and awed the audiences at Open House. In late winter, the team provided entertainment at the half-time show for one of Columbia University’s Men’s Basketball games. Six seniors were selected to perform a dance number in AMSU’s Spring Musical, *Hairspray*. The Team hopes to end the year by participating at local high school talent shows and closing out the year at AMSU’s Vocalist Concert.

**CHEER TEAM**

The 2012-2013 Cheer Team kicked off the season with an energetic debut at Pep Rally. Students, teachers and administrators raved about the cheerleaders’ performance, leaving everyone wanting more. This upcoming year the team plans on cheering at home basketball games, performing at various AMSU events, participating in community service activities and taking part in Dance/Cheer Showcases. The team was founded by senior Shannon Qualls (captain) and sophomore Jai Hundley-Addison (co-captain). These two students were on a mission to increase AMSU’s spirit. Their persistence was recognized by Ms. Harrison and soon after a search for a Cheer Coach began.

This year, under the direction of Ms. Carla Lide ‘05, Shannon and Jai’s dream became reality. Carla has been studying ballet, jazz and hip hop at the Dance Theater of Harlem, Broadway Dance Center and Alvin Ailey. She continued her passion throughout college as coach and captain of the Concordia College Dance Team. Carla provided dance and cheer instruction to various age groups and genders at Asphalt Green, Springfield College and Camp Riverdale. She received her Bachelor’s Degree in Behavioral Science from Concordia College and a Master’s Degree in Athletic Counseling from Springfield College. “Cheer has given these girls a reason to stay motivated, physically fit and happy. I’m glad I can give back to my alma mater in such a fun and unique way!” said Carla. Stay tuned to www.amsu.org for the latest Cheer Team performances at events, basketball games and showcases.

**STUDENT INSTRUCTED GYM CLASSES**

Starting in February 2013, students of each grade level at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula will be assigned the task of designing a physical education class. After the class has been designed, each student will instruct their project during gym class as a physical activity. Freshmen have the opportunity to create unique aerobic instruction. The sophomore class has the task of creating a circuit training exercise. A multicultural dance has been assigned to the junior class. The senior class may have the most difficult task by having to design a game which they must teach and play. The objective of having the student instructed classes is to initiate and promote team work and leadership skills.
AMSU Events

RING DAY
With the assistance of faculty and staff, the seniors skated up the Grand Concourse, led by the 52nd Police Precinct to the school. News 12, the Bronx, came out to the AMSU Ring Day Celebration. Fr. John Vigilanti spoke on air with News 12 reporter Melissa Valcarcel about the 53 year-old tradition of skating on Ring Day at AMSU. The Senior Class of 2013 lived up to AMSU’s wonderful custom of showing AMSU spirit and pride. With umbrellas in hand, parents, faculty and staff, as well as AMSU sophomore sisters, cheered on the senior class as they arrived safely at the school. After skating their way through Bronx history, the senior class made their way to the AMSU auditorium, where a formal ceremony began. One of the highlights included students from the junior class performing a skit dedicated to the seniors. The skit was clever in a whole new way. The music was spirited and energetic with carefully prepared choreography. Fr. Vigilanti presented most of the rings; however, some students received their rings from their AMSU sisters or mothers who graduated before them. An exception was made this year for a memorable presentation of the graduation ring by Army National Guard Sergeant Patrick Ford. Patrick presented the ring to his sister, Clarissa.

ALUMNAE RECEPTIONS
In 2012, two alumnae gatherings were held at the homes of AMSU board members Susan McCarthy Cronin ’65 (chair) and Anne Marie Nichol Hynes ’67. The gatherings were an opportunity for alumnae in the area to meet and mingle outside the school. This was also an opportunity for Fr. John Vigilanti to give alumnae an update on the school and discuss the upcoming capital campaign to celebrate AMSU’s 160th anniversary in 2015. On November 17th alumnae gathered in Connecticut at the home of Ann Marie Hynes.

FRESHMEN ICE CREAM SOCIAL
PROMOTING SERVIAM
Sr. Alice Marie Giordano, O.S.U. ’52 has been hosting the freshman Ice Cream Social for several years with great enthusiasm. With the help of the student body and faculty, this event has been established to promote the AMSU serviam spirit. During the distribution of an assortment of ice creams and toppings, sophomore, junior and senior sisters tell stories of their volunteer experiences using powerpoint presentations. Some of the service opportunities include: the AMSU Cardinal Hayes Program, Our Lady of Refuge, and Serviam Gardens. In each of these programs, AMSU students describe how they have assisted people who are physically or mentally challenged. Visit www.amsu.org to learn more about this event and student involvement in the community.
SSP Dinner

Over 120 mentors, students and parents attended AMSU’s 3rd Annual SSP Opening Dinner on October 17th. SSP hosted the dinner for this gathering where many of the students met their mentors for the first time. Some of the mentors sought out by SSP have no relationship to AMSU, but want to help counsel a young woman through high school. We are very lucky to have many AMSU alumnae mentor SSP students. At the dinner 10 alumnae were in attendance. “We are so proud to have alumnae involved in this very important program” said Anna Parra Ramos. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please contact Anna Parra Ramos (718) 733-6249 or alumnae@amsu.org.

(left to right) Debbie O’Connor ’77, Jaime Ortiz ’04, Eileen Rios ’99, Kathleen Kearns ’75, Gena Surphlis ’92, Rosemarie Roche ’76, Alexis McCullough ’95, Ana Maria Cuevas Robben ’88, Donna Nava ’71, and Rashida Burnham ’06.

Vanessa Williams Visits AMSU

On Friday, December 21, AMSU celebrated the Christmas season with a performance dedicated to the young victims of Newtown, CT.

At the invitation of Fr. John Vigilanti, Ms. Vanessa Williams, and her daughter Sasha, visited AMSU for the assembly conducted by AMSU’s music instructor, Ms. Laura Mulholland. Ms. Williams is a parishioner of St. John and Mary parish in Chappaqua, NY, where Fr. Vigilanti resided for 14 years. Although not a graduate of AMSU, Ms. Williams did not hesitate to lend support to the students participating in the Christmas Concert. The concert focused on Christmas carols from around the world and a performance by students in the Juilliard-sponsored Instrumental Music Program (IMP). At the end of the concert Ms. Williams graciously answered questions from the students about her career.

Community Outreach at AMSU

Surprise Visit from an Old Neighbor

On January 7th, Curtis Sliwa visited AMSU. During his visit he spoke of how the neighborhood has changed in comparison to when he started the Guardian Angels. Curtis mentioned living directly across the street by Bedford Park Boulevard. His sister Aleta St. James attended the Academy of Mount St. Ursula when it was an elementary school. Aleta attended first grade at AMSU in 1947 and remained for part of second grade. Curtis mentioned how his sister admired AMSU and how the Ursuline nuns instilled in her a strong sense of discipline and spirituality. Curtis recalled hearing about how the Ursuline nuns taught with such strict focus on detail and their dedication to each student’s excellence was quite impressive.
**JUNIOR RETREAT**

On the weekend of December 1-3 2012, thirty girls from the junior class enjoyed a retreat at the Blair Lodge located off Peekskill Hollow Road in Putnam Valley, NY. The theme of the retreat was "We do not walk this road alone.." The girls brought a Wii system and games for some fun. The big hits were the dancing and singing competition games and everyone including teachers got into the act! Along with Ms. Jeanne DiBenedetto, alumnae and teachers gave witness talks and shared stories in small groups. The girls enjoyed some meditation time and Fr. John Vigilanti attended to celebrate Mass on Saturday. After Mass, everyone participated in a powerful prayer service which most of the girls described as "life changing." Many friendships were developed and relationships were strengthened. Having the young alumnae attend provided a powerful connection between AMSU’s past and future. One alumna who served, Aleysha Taveras ’12, said she had an even more powerful experience as a team member than as a student because she got to relive her retreat over again, through serving the current students.

**YOUNG ALUMNAE REUNION**

On January 3, 2013, thirty-seven alumnae attended the Young Alumnae Reunion. Christine Pineiro ’01, along with the development department, hosted the event. Christine spoke to the Young Alumnae about how determination, hard work and a positive outlook could strengthen you during the most difficult times. Christine is presently working for Aflac, but is pursuing a career in drama, theater, stage, improv and television. Christine made the following suggestions to the young alumnae: "Believe in yourself, listen to your heart, have fun, and be playful in everything you do. Have a positive attitude even during failures, remember that it is never too late to live out your dreams, and learn good time management skills while you are away at school. Most importantly, call your parents at least once a week.” After discussing some of the many challenges of 1st year college students, the young alumnae visited their old teachers’ classrooms and mentored the current AMSU students on what they have recently learned while away at college.

**GIVING BACK**

Thanks to two alumnae, Adrienne Rolla ’76 and Kerri Gould Reynolds ’86, with the help of Kerri’s husband Richard Reynolds of Plaza Construction and eight other construction companies, two of AMSU’s bathrooms were completely remodeled last summer. The total cost for the remodeling would have been approximately $50,000 for materials and labor if the school had to incur the cost. Like many of our alumnae, Adrienne and Kerri continue serve the Academy of Mount St. Ursula’s Serviam motto.

**FUNDRAISERS**

The **AMSU Fall Fundraiser** raffle netted the school $10,400 thanks to all of our generous alumnae and friends. The winner of the fundraiser was Denise Dalton Tormey ’72, who generously donated a portion of the winnings back to AMSU! We hope to hold this event again next year.

**BLUE MOON CAFE FUNDRAISER**

The Blue Moon Cafe fundraiser on January 21, 2013 raised $347.40 for AMSU. Special thanks to all who participated.

**2013 ALUMNAE REUNION**

**FOR CLASSES ENDING IN 3S AND 8S**

Please mark your calendar for this year’s annual alumnae reunion to be held on Saturday, April 20, 2013 beginning at 12pm at Lake Isle Country Club. For anyone who is interested in visiting the school, light refreshments and student tours will be offered that morning from 10am-11:30am. More information will be sent in the formal invitation in mid-March. If you have recently moved, please contact us at alumnae@amsu.org or 718-733-6242 to ensure you receive an invitation.

For all past events, you can see images on the AMSU website.
WELCOME NEW FACULTY

Ms. Jillian McCoy started her career at AMSU in September 2012 as the Library Media Specialist. Prior to AMSU, Jillian worked for New York Public Library. Jillian’s credentials include a Master of Library Science from CUNY-Queens College with a Certificate in Children’s and Young Adult Services and a Bachelor of Arts in History from Texas State University. In addition to running the Library Media Center, Jillian moderates the Library Council.

Ms. Francine Civitano began working as a mathematics teacher at AMSU in September 2012. She currently teaches Geometry Honors, Geometry, and Applied Mathematics, and enjoys extra curricular activities as a tutor. Francine has her BS in Mathematics and Sociology from Iona College, and a Master’s in Adolescent Education and Students with Disabilities from Mercy College. Francine previously taught at Foxfire in Yonkers.

Ms. Christine Katwaru started with AMSU in October 2012, teaching Earth Science and Living Environment. Christine is also involved in tutoring after school. Her credentials include a B.A. in Biology from Queens College, and she is in the process of obtaining an M.S. in Biology Education at Molloy College. Christine previously taught at Robert Goddard High School in Ozone Park, Queens.

Ms. Summer Evans began her career as a Mathematics teacher at AMSU in January 2013. She currently teaches Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, and Pre-Calculus, and performs extra curricular activities in mathematical tutoring. Summer’s credentials include a Masters of Science in Secondary Education from Johns Hopkins University as well as a B.S. in Mathematics and Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Summer previously taught Transitional Mathematics, Geometry, Algebra II/H, and College Preparatory Mathematics at Patterson High School Baltimore, MD.

AMSU
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
ENSURE THEIR FUTURE

The goal of the “Ensure Their Future” campaign is to secure the capital necessary to support the academic curriculum and college preparatory programs that are required to serve the educational needs of the 21st century student. The financial goal of the campaign is $3 million dollars.

A Message from the Ursuline Provincial of the Eastern Province, Sr. Mary Sullivan, O.S.U.


From the beginning these challenging and encouraging words of Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursuline Sisters, have inspired and motivated those following in her footsteps. The uncharted shores of New Orleans welcomed Ursulines in 1727. From this small band of women the first Catholic school was founded and a tradition of formation and innovation spread to many places in the United States, including Morrisania, NY in 1855 and then to Bedford Park in 1892.

The mission of these past 158 years has been marked by academic excellence, service to others, the development of young women leaders. It must continue! There are new needs, new possibilities. Let us get behind the Capital Campaign to keep this mission alive. Let’s “do something, get moving, be confident and we will see BIG SURPRISES.”

You will hear more about the capital campaign later this year. If you would like to volunteer to assist with the campaign, please contact Anna Parra Ramos 718-733-6249/aramos@amsu.org.
Ruth Anne Cronin Thompson '50
“Greetings to all my classmates in the class of ’50. I am teaching online for Pace University, where I’ve been as both a faculty member and former associate dean since 1982.”


Elizabeth Shea McDermott’s ’56 mother, Parthenia Duross Shea (AMSU 1921) started a tradition for her three daughters to keep in touch and meet several times a year which continues to this day. Even though Parthenia died at 91, the tradition continues. Patricia Shea Draddy, ’49, DC, Betsy Shea McDermott, ’56, Boston, and Marijean Shea Sommer ’59, CT meet often at resorts, have traveled to Europe and partake of the grape whenever they can! “We’re best friends and not surprised we’re still traveling together. Our history at Mount St. Ursula began in the early 1900’s when our six Duross aunts and uncles walked across Marion Avenue to the grammar and high school. We have great memories of school, family and friends which started when we were all very young at the Mount. There are endless subjects from the past to the present discussed and we can’t wait for the next trip whether it’s Cape Cod, Dublin or a little pub in the Bronx.”

Carole Cavanaugh-Fettig’s ’57 family owns a good size farm in Jamaica, W.I. “We are developing it for coconut, coffee and cocoa. It is quite beautiful there, high in the mountains, with a gorgeous view of the sea, and the weather is wonderful. My grandchildren are looking forward to meeting the donkey we are trying to adopt. Wish we were younger!”

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Maryann Dunworth McEvoy ’59 - In October 2012, Maryann McEvoy was honored at “Russo’s on The Bay” by her parish, St. Rose of Lima in Rockaway Beach, NY. She received this distinction for her many years of service to her parish and her community.

Joanne Limberg Pergolis ’61 and her husband, Peter moved from Westchester to Long Island in March 2012, to be closer to their grandkids, Haley-5 yrs, Olivia-2 yrs and Alex-9 mos. Joanne is president of Ann Sullivan Lion’s Club, White Plains, NY & NY Area Trustee of Lion’s Project for Canine Companions for Independence with her husband, Peter, who is the Lion President of this organization. They raise funds to provide service dogs for Vets, handicapped adults, children, health facilities, autistic children and the deaf. This picture is from a Lion’s Convention. Canine Companions for Independence was invited to march in the Inaugural Parade on January 21st. They participated in this Parade and attended an Inaugural Ball for the Disabled.

Carole Kakos ’61 - Kathy Cleary Price embarked from her Virginia home on the auto train to Florida in December and was able to connect with Carole Kakos—who lives conveniently off the interstate between Fort Myers and St. Petersburg. Despite not having seen one another in more than a half century, there was definitely no lack of conversation. Topics included Florida living, education, politics and more. One big topic was travel, with Carole having made it to all 7 continents and Kathy having achieved 5. Carole provided a mini-tour of the golf community where she resides, prompting Kathy to start pondering spending the winters in Florida. Thus, the stage is set for more reunions. Kathy would love to hear from another alums living in Florida.

Terry Donini Hannah ’63 and Don Larson are happy to announce their engagement. The wedding will take place on May 18, 2013 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Glenview, Illinois.

Pat Roche Moran ’63 and husband Billy celebrated their 45th Wedding Anniversary on September 3, 2011. The dinner was hosted by sons Matt, Brian and Bill and granddaughter Shannon. Pat is currently working as an ED RN at Orange Regional Medical Center in Middletown New York.

Maureen Murphy Nutting ’64 is currently mentoring four community colleges/districts for the NEH Bridging Cultures initiative—in St. Louis, MO; Fort Worth, TX; Pocahontas, AR; and Charleston, WV. “I will be visiting these campuses soon—the first three in early September and the last, in late March. Are any of my classmates in any of these areas? By the way, Marguerite Crowley Weibel, my AMSU classmate, is now my teaching colleague at North Seattle Community College. She teaches ESL, and I, History. It’s great fun to have her here!”

Leonora (Lee) DeAngelis Sensinger, ’64, wishes to share news of her marriage to Norman Sensinger in Baltimore on January 23,
Marguerite Crowley Weibel ’64 - After working for many years as a librarian at Ohio State University, Marguerite retired and moved to Seattle with her husband. She is now “semi-retired” and enjoys her second career, teaching English to international students at North Seattle Community College. She got this job in part through the Mount St. Ursula network, namely fellow ’64 alumna Maureen Murphy Nutting. The photo shows Maureen and Marguerite with Mark Mitsui, the president of the college. She hopes to see many of her fellow classmates at her 50th reunion next year.

Ann Bergassi Chiodini ’65 and her husband Rick have just returned from visiting their daughter, Sue, and her family in Kona, Hawaii (3 grandchildren, Azaya-12, Ruby-8 and Camille-6) for the holidays. They get to see them about three times a year. They hope to eventually retire to their condo in HI and be near them all year long. Their son, Steve, is an attorney in San Francisco, specializing in tax law related to charitable foundations. He just returned from a two week trip to Vietnam and is now planning his next special trip, which will hopefully include his parents, to China in the fall of 2013. "Rather than retiring, both Rick and I began our own businesses a few years ago and are now really busy – he with his environmental engineering practice and I with consulting on the financial side of the implementation of health care exchanges and other studies related to the Affordable Care Act. I love working on innovative projects and have had the good fortune to be helping the State of Massachusetts develop their plan for the financial management of their Exchange – possibly, the first to be up and running in the country…. stay tuned. If any of you are ever in Rhode Island (or Kona, Hawaii) let us know – we may be able to get together.”

Joni Corcoran ’65 is happily retired from teaching and living in Lakewood Ranch, Florida half of the year and Cape Cod, Massachusetts the other half. She is on three Boards of Directors - the Rotary Club of Chatham, MA; Disaster Aid USA a non-profit that helps provide shelter, clean water and rebuilding tools in the US and around the world following disasters; the Nauset Heights Association. “I volunteer my services as the webmaster of Disaster Aid USA, create electronic newsletters for Nauset Heights Association, and will be the President of my Rotary Club in 2015. I have 10 grandchildren ranging in age from 3 to 17 and they are the delight of my life. I enjoy dog training, reading, movies, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.”

Marie Ringwald ’65 would like to share her artwork with classmates. Marie’s updated website can be visited at www.marieringwald.com.

Jo Ann Santora Christensen ’67 (second from left) is now the Secretary to the Board, in addition to her responsibilities as the Administrative Assistant to the President. Mrs. Christensen has worked for the Bank for six years, is a graduate of CUNY Hunter in New York City, and previously worked as an adjunct Professor at Columbia-Greene Community College. She is a resident of Catskill.

Ann Mooney McLoone ’67 retired as department chair of developmental psychology at the University of Minnesota in 2009 after 30 years. Along with her husband, she travels, still does lots of volunteering and keeps busy with her adult children. Her other sisters, (also alumnae): Patty, Kay, and Maryanne are still working. She would love to hear from her classmates: moone001@umn.edu.

Linda Sutter Rubinstein ’67 proudly announces the October 2012 publication, by Thunder Lake Press, of her husband’s first novel Mad Dog House. It’s the chilling story of a suburban doctor who opens a restaurant with childhood friends, only to be dragged into the world of organized crime. This gritty thriller examines loyalty and how far a respectable man will go to protect his family. Linda and Mark live in Connecticut sharing their home with Hank Williams and Jenny Belle, two of the most incredibly wonderful pups, ever.

Joan Kelly Vaillancourt ’69 - “My husband, David Vaillancourt was killed on September 14, 2011 while riding his bicycle home from work. He was only 4 blocks from home in Hastings on Hudson, New York. His brother,
Fr. Mark Vaillancourt is the President of Kennedy Catholic High School in Somers, New York and we have set up a scholarship fund in his honor through Kennedy Catholic High School. It is called the David B. Vaillancourt Scholarship Fund and you can go to kennedycatholic.org and under gael giving and then under “give to scholarships,” you can donate to the David B. Vaillancourt Scholarship Fund. David was a firm believer in Catholic school education and would have loved this scholarship in his name. He was a kind and loving man who helped so many people.”

Susan Schwartzman ’70 has recently moved to Pawling in upstate New York.

Marilyn Healy-McDermott ’71 would like to announce the birth of her granddaughter, Michelle Thomas Tenent, on February 10, 2012. “I travel to Memphis as frequently as I can to visit with her, my daughter and her husband. What a gift!”

Virginia Franklin ’72 is an Associate Professor in the English Dept. at St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights and an avid photographer. She is faculty moderator of the SFC Photography Club, which had a successful exhibit which led to their work being featured in a calendar given to major college donors, and to publication in an online journal. Virginia’s own work has been exhibited in Rio II Gallery in Manhattan and has been accepted in international photography salons in New Zealand, the Netherlands, Canada, and Australia.

Eileen Cooney Leahy ’76 - Photo is of the Class of 1976 celebrating Diana Burn’s, ’76 wedding in October 2012 with Jean Moriarty Arnold, Mary Moran McCaffrey and Eileen Cooney Leahy.

Margaret Pegie King ’77 just finished her thesis and received her Masters Degree in Criminal Justice in from Molloy College in December 2012. After almost 20 years as a police officer, currently the rank of Sergeant, she is planning to use her degree to work as an Adjunct Professor in the field of Criminal Justice.

Eileen Hoyt Fernandez ’82
“I am doing well with life. I have two beautiful children and my niece whom I am raising is going to law school in the fall.”

Lucille Renwick Archibold ’83 - Is still living in Mexico City and will be for the next few years as her husband finishes up his stint as NYT bureau chief. Lucille continues to teach Public Relations and Marketing/Advertising at a local university in Mexico City. She also continues to work on her Spanish though she admits that her children have now surpassed her in fluency. In February, Lucille and her husband competed in their first half Ironman triathlon to give middle age a swift kick in the rear end. During their free time, Lucille and her family enjoy exploring all the beautiful parts of Mexico. She wishes all her classmates a wonderful 2013!!!

Francesca Kosick Bossey ’86 - Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino recently appointed Francesca Kosick Bossey ’86 as Deputy Budget Director. Francesca will be responsible for the management and supervision of an almost $2B budget. Prior to her appointment, Francesca was the head finance officer of an Omnicom Group advertising and marketing agency on Madison Avenue in New York City.

Jeannie Humphries, O.S.U. ’89 will graduate from Fordham University in May 2013 with a PhD in Language, Literacy and Learning. She is writing her dissertation on Students’ Self-Generated Questions and Independent Reading Comprehension. Jeannie teaches graduate classes at Fordham University and Concordia College on Literacy and Special Education and supervises student teachers. She serves on AMSU’s Board and would like to work with more young alumnae in planning fun and spirit filled events. Jeannie can be contacted at jeanniehum@yahoo.com.

Jennifer Guzman LaPietra ’90 would like to announce the birth of her beautiful son Joseph on October 17, 2011 weighing 3 lbs. 14 oz. He was a 32 week ex-preemie and through the grace of God and many prayers he was released after eight weeks in the NICU at NYU. He is now strong and healthy at 25 lbs. and will be turning one this year! Jennifer and Vinny LaPietra are proud parents.
Katherine Reese Kusza ’90 obtained Pro Board Firefighter I/II Certification in 2012 while working full-time as an Urgent Care/Psych nurse and part-time as a FF/EMT for the Town of Ashburnham, MA. Her daughters are attending Cushing Academy in Ashburnham on full scholarships. Fiona, a sophomore, is an active participant in the school’s theatre program as an assistant costume mistress, set designer, stage manager and tech crew member. Arden is a member of the J.V. Soccer team, jazz ensemble and is Vice President of the Freshman Class. Sons Iain (Gr.5) and Rhys (Gr.4) are keeping their father busy with Webelos, school sponsored activities and just being boys! Also, many thanks to grandparents Ethel McKeon Reese ’64 and Anthony Reese for their unwavering support over this very busy year!

Keisha Wooten-Smith ’92 and her husband Luther Smith welcomed the newest addition to their family, Asali Zurhi Smith on November 8, 2012.

Miroslava Moya Ferrer ’94 would love to announce the birth of her third child, Kendall Liyen. She was born on July 23, 2012 weighing in at 8lbs. 6.6oz. and measuring 20.5” long. She joins her 2 older brothers, Jackson Luis (born 3/30/05) and Brody Liam (born 12/11/06). Miroslava and her husband Jorge, celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary on January 4, 2013.

Our Lady of Angels School 
 invites you to

CELEBRATE OLA

on Saturday, April 27, 2013 at 5:00pm

Our Lady of Angels
2865 Claffin Avenue • Bronx, New York 10468
718.549.3503

CINCO DE MAYO RAFFLE

First Prize:...............$4,000
Second Prize:.........$1,500
Third Prize:..........$500

Tickets - $25 each or 5 for $100
The drawing will take place on Monday, May 6th at 2pm
and posted on the school website – www.amsu.org

Each ticket stub: $25. Total ticket (five stubs): $100.

In Memoriam

Adelaide Schubert Cudone ’46
Suzanne Cox Welsh ’46
Eleanor Donlon Hannigan ’50
mother of
Jean Hannigan Moran ’81
Norma Mahoney,
cousin of
Sr. Alice Marie Giordano, O.S.U. ’52
Maryanne Fane Eaton ’53
Barbara Bruno Caraceni ’55
Diane Dolan Iannuzzi ’63
Bill Moran,
husband of
Patricia Roche Moran ’63
Margaret McCullen Rice ’63
Anne Leonard Scott ’63
Patty Sheehan ’65
Eileen Dolphin ’67
Richard Salvatore,
husband of
Ellen Benisatto Salvatore ’69
Silvestro Montenero,
father of
Barbara Montenero DeAngelo ’69
Daniel Barden
(1st grader at Sandy Hook Elementary School, CT)
nephew of
Rosaleen Giblin Murchison ’70
Madeline Giblin O’Neill ’76 and
Elizabeth Boucher ’76 (deceased)
Eileen Kurta ’71
Mary Heavey,
mother of
Patricia Heavey Boskovski ’79
Laura Sandleiter Antonucci ’88
AMSU invites rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls to attend the 2013 Summer Intensive Cheer Clinic from July 8th to 25th. Morning Session: Stretching & Warm Ups, Dance Instruction. Afternoon Session: Specialty Breaks, Cheerleading Instruction, Character Building. Monday through Thursday, 9am to 3pm.