Facing Challenges with Perseverance
Dear Alums, Benefactors, and Friends:

To say that the past academic year was extremely hectic would be an understatement. Some school days were missed because of weather, the Capital Campaign, Ensure Their Future, started in earnest, our RCIA program embraced 12 students at different stages in their spiritual journey, AMSU students and students from Fordham, All Hallows, and Mount St. Michael put on a very ambitious production of In The Heights, and we put out the welcome mat for the students of Cabrini High School, which closed after 115 years.

Our $3 million capital campaign reached $2 million with another year to go before the celebration of our 160th anniversary. The Ursuline sisters continue to be our pillar of strength. We are also deeply grateful to those alums and donors who have set the pace (one gift of $500,000, two gifts of $250,000, one gift of $150,000, 3 gifts of $100,000), and we give special recognition to those who financially assisted in helping us embrace a cohort of Cabrini students. We were able to raise, in roughly two months, $208,000 to integrate Cabrini SSP (Student Sponsor Partners) and Cabrini Merit Scholars. Once again, our alums demonstrated “Serviam” in a most helpful and generous way, allowing Cabrini students to finish their high school education in a Catholic high school known for its academic strengths, warm environment, and spiritual nurturing. We extend a warm welcome to our Cabrini “sisters” this Fall. We are also anticipating our first student from China. We have no doubt that our AMSU students will warmly embrace these new arrivals.

On a personal note, when I was a high school student at Cathedral high school in NYC, I boarded at school, since my family was living in Rockland at the time. My parents, who were raising 6 children, could not afford to cover the cost of $400. An anonymous donor from my home parish in Pearl River picked up the tab. Because of that generosity, I have always felt obligated to give back. You should know that today I give only to AMSU because I know how every cent is spent. There are many worthy causes on the local and national level who solicit your help. How many offer you an independent, transparent, audited report? We can and we do! As we intensify our Capital Campaign solicitations this academic year, I urge all alums who were recipients of Ursuline scholarships or financial aid during their years at AMSU to make a serious pledge toward our $3 million goal. Alums from St. Jerome, St. Philip Neri, St. Angela Merici, etc., received scholarships to attend AMSU. Help us to continue that gracious tradition. The Gospel reminds us: “To whom much has been given, much will be expected.”

This summer, once again, I was in Honolulu fulfilling my military obligation to our service men and women at Tripler Army Medical Center, the largest military medical facility in the Pacific rim and was fortunate to stay with Drs. Elynore Clark Cucinell ’52 and her husband Sam. I reported the day after we graduated 99 students of the Class of 2014. Now, we look forward, with great expectations, to the class of 2018, continuing a revered tradition of Academics, Arts, and Service for 160 years!

One final note. I would like to express my appreciation to Ms. Lisa Harrison who left AMSU as principal for a new position on Long Island. We have been fortunate to have her as teacher, vice principal, and then as principal for the last 5 years. We wish her much success.

A standing invitation remains: if you are in the area, visit, meet our students, and reawaken your affection for AMSU and the Ursuline tradition that has inspired so many. This past April two of our alums, Ellen Smith Alger ’62 and Joanne Lo Pinto ’66, disappointed to find that the Botanical Gardens was closed on Mondays, took me up on my standing invitation. They may have been deprived of the blooming flowers of the Gardens, but were treated to the flowering array of a new generation of AMSU students, their achievements, and their hopes for the future.

Sincerely,

Fr. John A. Vigilanti, Ed.D.
President
Letter from the Chair, Board of Trustees

Dear AMSU Alumnae,

The AMSU community is pleased to announce the appointment of Sr. Jean Marie Humphries, osu, PhD ’89, as the new Principal.

Sr. Jean Marie has her PhD in Language, Literacy and Learning, a Master’s of Science in Reading and Special Education, and is permanently certified in education and reading K-6 and K-12. She has supervised teachers, taught in many classrooms, worked with teachers in planning and executing courses/curriculum, served on the AMSU Board of Trustees, just to name a few of her qualifications. She has a deep love for her alma mater, and a strong belief in the Mission of our school and its students. Please welcome Sr. Jean Marie as she takes on her new role as principal.

“...Greet them, and shake hands with them, also on my behalf. And tell them that they should want to be united and in concord together, all being of one will...”

“...great glory and triumph will burst forth for us. And now therefore, all of you, please be attentive, with great and eager hearts...”

- St. Angela Merici

Sincerely,

Susan McCarthy Cronin ‘65
Chair, Board of Trustees

Letter from the Principal

Dear Fellow Alumnae of AMSU,

It is with great enthusiasm that I enter into my new role as principal of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. I am looking forward to being involved in the day-to-day ministry of our special gem and treasure in the Bronx.

Whenever I meet and converse with any of the current AMSU student body, I am always so impressed by how articulate, well spoken, poised and determined the young ladies are. It is clear that the AMSU women of today are receiving an excellent education in academics, arts, service and leadership.

I look forward to working with the entire AMSU community, especially you, my fellow alumnae, to continue our wonderful programs. Hopefully together we can look at new opportunities to help AMSU grow even stronger and allow us to meet the needs of today’s students and the wider world.

Through the guidance of God, St. Angela Merici, and the entire AMSU community working together, AMSU will continue to shine and march on to victory.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve our AMSU community. Please know you are always welcome to visit us. We would love to see you and show you our school spirit.

“Build community wherever you go” - St. Angela Merici

Prayers and blessings,

Sr. Jean Marie Humphries, osu, PhD ’89
Principal
Message from the Executive Director

Dear Alumnae and Friends,

The Campaign for the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, “Ensure Their Future” has had an extraordinary response and support from its alumnae. We have over $2 million in pledges and we are very optimistic about reaching our goal of $3 million by our 160th Anniversary in 2015. Not only has the campaign been very successful, but our Annual Fund has increased nearly 40%. This is a wonderful accomplishment!

During this time of year, I usually announce where we are in terms of making our quota. I am extremely happy to report that we are at 95% of our goal. I am grateful to all of our generous alumnae and friends who have contributed so far this year. There is still time for those who have not! You can make a gift through the AMSU website by clicking DONATE NOW, mailing your check made payable to the ACADEMY OF MOUNT ST.

I want to express my gratitude for all you do to support AMSU and its students. We are very lucky to have such wonderful alumnae and friends. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sincerely,

Anna E. Parra
Executive Director of Development

The Ensure Their Future Capital Campaign, in honor of AMSU’s 160th anniversary in 2015, has reached over $1.5 million. This fall we expect a pledge for $500,000, leaving us with just under $1 million to raise in our last year of the campaign. The case for support is to secure $3 million for full and partial academic scholarships, financial aid for students in need and for AMSU’s STAR (Students and Teachers Aiming and Reaching) Program for students who need additional academic support to reach their full potential. We are extremely grateful to those who have given generously to the campaign so far.

 AMSU held several regional gatherings in New York City, White Plains and Greenwich, CT during the spring, which were graciously hosted by alumnae, Joan O’Meara Winant ’69, Debra Kiernan O’Connor ’77 and Anne Marie Nichol Hynes ’67, respectively. Guests were greeted by the host and Fr. Vigilanti spoke about AMSU today, its remarkable students and the purpose of the campaign. (See page 19 for photo of NYC reception at the home of Joan O’Meara Winant ’69.)

In our last issue of Take Note, we mentioned the sad news of the closing of Mother Cabrini High School (MCHS) in June of 2014. Student Sponsor Partners (SSP) contacted us asking if we would welcome 31 rising SSP MCHS sophomores and seniors. Of course we agreed. Additionally, we offered to accept any of the 36 scholarship MCHS merit scholars who wished to enroll at AMSU. We reached out to AMSU alumnae and friends asking for support. We received an overwhelming response with nearly $210,000 for tuition assistance and academic scholarships. What an unbelievable act of serviam!

To celebrate AMSU’s 160th birthday we plan to have a celebration at the New York Botanical Garden on Friday, October 16, 2015. Our emcee for the festivities will be screen and Broadway star, Ms. Vanessa Williams. Please mark your calendar. More information to come on the honorees. We hope to see you there.
Mother Cabrini Final Alumnae Event

On Saturday April 5th, Mother Cabrini High School held its final alumnae reunion. The alumnae formed a group called the Cabrini Movement whose purpose is to raise funds in support of the current Cabrini students who wish to transfer to another Catholic high school. They invited the administration of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula to attend the alumnae Mass. AMSU Board of Trustee Chair, Susan McCarthy Cronin ’65 accompanied by Cecilia Granda ’99 and Christine Alindogan ’99, attended the service representing AMSU (photo above). After the Mass, Cabrini alumna Liane Ramirez Swierk ’88 acknowledged the generosity and support given to them by the AMSU community. They presented a plaque to Susan Cronin on behalf of Mother Cabrini High School for raising over $200,000 from AMSU alumnae and donors. This money will be used to provide financial support to the current Merit Scholars and SSP Cabrini students who wish to transfer to AMSU in the fall.

Aga po!

Please Help Support AMSU’s Ring Day Awards

AMSU has a wonderful tradition of presenting awards during ring day to seniors who have shown qualities that remind us of some special people who are no longer with us. Over the years, many awards have been established and funded by generous family members, faculty, alumnae and friends.

The awards which are currently presented each fall are in memory of: Laura Antonucci Sandleitner, Stephani Kopilak Diaferia, Zuliemi Torres, Samira Ahmed, and Karen Marsh. Faculty member, Ms. Kathy Corticcio has done a remarkable job transferring past events to DVD and selling them in order to raise funds for these awards.

Also, at a live auction during this the year’s alumnae reunion, the Class of 1999 raised $400 towards one of the awards.

We always need additional support to keep these awards going. If you are interested in purchasing DVDs, please contact Ms. Corticcio at kcorticcio@amsu.org.

If you are interested in making a donation toward one of these awards, contact Jessica Ruiz at jruiz@amsu.org or 718-733-6242.

Save the Date

160th Anniversary Hall of Fame Dinner Dance

Friday, October 16, 2015
New York Botanical Garden, Terrace Room
7 o’clock in the evening

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Aga po!
“Welcome Members of the Board, Fr. Vigilanti, Ms. Harrison, Mrs. Duggan, faculty, family and friends. Thank you to everyone who came to celebrate with us today. I spent hours pouring over this speech, trying to decide what to write. Firstly, I wanted it to be inspirational in a “wind beneath your wings” kind of way, but I did not have enough time for that. Then I wanted it to be emotional, but I figured the day would be enough cause for tears and honestly, that is just not in my personality. Next, I wanted it to be comedic, but then I remembered that I am really the only one who laughs at...”

To quote one of our administrators, ‘On this beautiful day in the Bronx,’ it is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome you all to AMSU’s graduation ceremony for the Class of 2014.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the graduating class for making it this far. Four years of hard work to get to this point, is quite an achievement. It makes those sleepless nights and homework-filled weekends well worth it...

If you are interested in reading the complete commencement speeches, scan this QR code from your smartphone.

Adline Sarpong is among the few high school students who has had the opportunity to graduate high school at the young age of fifteen. Adline attended the New Covenant Christian School in the Bronx until the 8th grade where she was able to excel at an early age. She began high school at age twelve as a freshman at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula where she immediately fit in despite her age difference from other students. Adline is one of many academic success stories at AMSU.

Adline will be attending Buffalo University in the fall.

Congratulations to the Class of 2014 as they continue to learn and live their “serviam” motto!

Graduates earned over $6 million in scholarships to college.
On Thursday May 15th at 7pm, AMSU held its 2014 Graduation Liturgy in the school chapel. This year was particularly special to the AMSU National Honor Society moderator, Ms. Amanda Mirabella, since this year’s graduating class were freshmen when she was appointed AMSU’s NHS Moderator. Many students gave above and beyond what is required of them. This year’s honorees have tutored and given more hours than previous years. Seniors Caitlin Harrison and Erica Henry have displayed exceptional management and teaching abilities. The honorees also demonstrated a strong loving support of each fellow classmate. Ms. Amanda Mirabella and Mr. Henry Triana share the responsibilities of organizing, scheduling and maintaining student grades and volunteer hours. They are confident that the students will have much success in the future and are eager to hear each of those stories.

This year’s inductees were:

Asia Alexander
Misha Alyas
Melvina Amamoo
Daniela Cabral
Ariane Caloobanan
Annette Chavez
Felicia Coleman
Enid Cordero
Gabriella Espiritusanto
Marielena Garcia
Caitlin Harrison
Erica Henry
Ekinadose Imafidon

Megan Irizarry
Wendy Koranteng
Alyendy Mercedes
Josephine Nguyen
Ariel Nieves
Lesleyann Perez
Samiha Rahman
Melanie Reyes
Daniella Rice
Melina Rosario
Adline Sarpong
Janae Yvette Williams
To me, being an artist means escaping into a dream world, living in the reality of your own imagination, and creating a separate reality known as a work of art; understanding a symbol and notation system few can understand and communicate in; and poetizing the world reality into art.

A work of art is a separate entity and exists independently from the artist. A viewer will interact with the artwork based upon their own knowledge and experiences and is beyond the control of the artist. When I make a work of art I am only concerned with personal expression and never concerned with how it will be perceived by the viewer.

My work developed slowly due to my missteps in education and it wasn’t until I took full responsibility for my own education that it began to develop. An artist must first learn academic production techniques and then learn to think like an artist. Both can only be accomplished through the study of the works and practices of great artists.

Mr. Gary Horn chose to become a high school teacher based upon the poor quality of art education he received. When Gary discovered through experience that art was not valued in most scholastic institutions he quit teaching in schools and concentrated on being an artist and an artist in residence working for state run arts councils and museum education programs.

Mr. Horn began his teaching career at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula in 2000. “I returned to classroom teaching for economic reasons and when I accepted a teaching position at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, I saw an opportunity to implement my teaching philosophies and practices to create what I felt what an art program should be in a scholastic institution.”

The challenge in teaching is changing the preconceptions and misconceptions many administrators, teachers, and students have about art, artists and art programs in scholastic institutions. The predominant misconception stems from the misapplied use of the word talent.

Art is not a talent. It is an academic course of study with a complex visual symbol and notation system comprising the discipline knowledge content necessary for visual thinking and art production. It has equal complexity to all other symbol systems but is not given the same structured learning time given to the language arts, math, sciences and music. Most art programs are little more than recreational activities that are sporadically squeezed into a scholastic schedule that guarantees limited success or failure by design.
The success I have had as a teacher, especially here at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula is getting faculty, staff and students to notice how a competent, active and learning academic art program can become an important part of the scholastic curriculum through sustained, scheduled learning opportunities. A strong arts program changes the working environment for the entire scholastic community and becomes an essential part of the school’s identity. My intent was to make the visual art programs a model of what art should be in a secondary scholastic institution. Steps have been made in the right direction, but there is still work to be done for the model to be completed.

Advice to aspiring artists:
Do not depend on anyone for your education. Each individual is responsible for their own education. Each individual knows or must find what they need to learn and teach themselves based on their own learning cognitive profile.

Mr. Horn is presently working on a book which is a critical look at the narrow focus of the education system which shows little regard for individual learning styles. The book identifies many shared characteristics of artists and creative individuals. Another focus of the book is a discussion of art production, programming, learning and lessons.

Visit Gary Horn’s online portfolio at: www.gjustpaintings.com/garyhorn.html
2014 Art Academy Student Awards

Art Academy students finished the year strong earning themselves several awards. This year’s winners are shown in the photograph above from right to left: Yazmine Fuentes ’14, 1st place Landscape La Salle; Cassandra Santos ’16, Honorable Mention Portraiture La Salle; Skiala Pyatt ’16, 2nd place Portraiture La Salle, 3rd place 9th & 10th grade level CYO; Asia Alexander ’14, 1st place 11th & 12th grade CYO, Zuri Mena ’14, 1st place Still Life La Salle and 1st place 11th & 12th grade CYO; Diamond Harrison ’14 (not in photo) 1st place Landscape, La Salle.

Zuri Mena ’14, 1st place still life La Salle
Cassandra Santos '16, Honorable Mention Portraiture, La Salle

Skiala Pyatt '16, 3rd place Still Life, La Salle

Yazmine Fuentes '14, 1st place Landscape, La Salle
Music Bringing People Together

On April 8th, the sophomore class attended the Broadway show *ONCE* courtesy of the Theater Development Fund of NYC. AMSU sophomores, Cassandra Santos ’16, Stephanie Toro ’16, and Endres Jaquez ’16, have had previous exposure to Broadway plays and had many good things to say about this show. Here’s what they had to say about their experience. “Music in person brought it more to life.” “I was intrigued by the cast acting while performing musical pieces rather than separate musicians performing in an orchestra.” “It must have been a lot more difficult to perform and act at the same time.” Some of their favorite characters included Reza, the girl’s cousin because she was outgoing and passionate and Billy, the owner of the shop, because he added comedy to the romantic show.

*ONCE* story line:
Winner of eight 2012 Tony Awards including BEST MUSICAL, *ONCE* is a truly original Broadway experience.

Featuring an impressive ensemble of actor/musicians who play their own instruments onstage, *ONCE* tells the enchanting tale of a Dublin street musician who is about to give up on his dream when a beautiful young woman takes a sudden interest in his haunting love songs. As the chemistry between them grows, his music soars to powerful new heights, but their unlikely connection turns out to be deeper and more complex than your everyday romance. It’s an unforgettable story about going for your dreams and the power of music to connect us all.

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AMSU Performs *IN THE HEIGHTS*

AMSU theater presented *IN THE HEIGHTS* on March 28th, 29th, and 30th. The girls of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula teamed up with the boys of All Hallows High School, Fordham Preparatory School, and Mount St. Michael Academy to deliver an exceptional song and dance performance. The cast consisted mostly of freshmen and sophomores who rose to the occasion. The performers may not live in Washington Heights but showing off that Latin spice was second nature for these young actors. The cast, crew and musical performance were terrific. Audience member Sharon Davis said, “It was absolutely fantastic! I enjoyed every moment of the show. It was wonderful and refreshing to see young people doing great things with their lives!”

AMSU Alumna Celeste Cruz ’01 writes, “The show was spectacular! Great cast! Wonderful dance routines! Powerful voices, beautiful stage, and special effects and lighting!” Please visit AMSU.org for info about AMSU’s ACADEMICS, ARTS and SERVICE programs. Be sure to “Like” us on Facebook.
Spring Musical

A spring concert was the perfect cure for the winter blues after a very long, snowy winter. This year’s Spring Concert held on May 8th, was filled with uplifting melodies with themes of love and loss. Ms. Laura Mullholland directed musical performances by the Vocal Techniques class, and the Juilliard Flute and Clarinet class. Accompanist, Jeffrey Hoffman also provided his time and talent to make the AMSU spring musical a success.

Media Arts Final Projects - Freshmen

Each webpage you look at is written in a program language called HTML. HTML can be thought of as the skeleton that gives every webpage structure. Throughout the year, 9th graders learned HTML to add paragraphs, headings, images and links to webpages. This year’s final project for the students was to recreate the MLB Standings in table format as shown in the left column.

Media Arts Final Projects - Juniors and Seniors

As a combined final project for the AMSU juniors and seniors, the Forensics teacher, Ms. Ruth Taveras and Media Arts teacher, Mr. Henry Triana offered an interesting and unique opportunity to create a video. Students were given the task of recreating and simulating a news cast of a real life crime scene. The criteria for the film project included presenting research of a crime scene from a scientific standpoint, scripting, acting, recording, editing and producing and posting the final video on Youtube or Vimeo. Students were able to collaborate in order to produce their final projects.
Commission on the Status of Women

This year’s Commission on the Status of Women, CSW58, had many wonderful sessions for girls. From March 9th through March 14th, AMSU students attended various events sponsored by organizations like the Working Group on Girls, the Girl Scouts, Girls Learn International and PLAN International.

Sr. Sueli Venacio from Brazil, who is studying English here, arrived in time to help chaperone students through the week and Sr. Ann Coughlin traveled to the session from Australia. Attendees were treated to talks by Amina Mohammed, Secretary Ban Ki Moon’s Advisor for Post 2015 Affairs, and Phumsile Mlambo Ngucka, head of UN Women. Anita Benn, a senior at AMSU, spoke at many assemblies and led most of these events.

CSW58 began with the Teen Orientation where the girls worked with girl advocates from around the world to understand the Millennium Goals and Post 2015 Development. Activities were designed so that participants could work together and have a clearer insight into the world they want to see.

On Monday, students attended a panel about girls’ entry into STEM Fields. Several leaders and students from the Girl Scouts spoke about their involvement in science clubs, robotics groups and other technological endeavors. They urged the development of curiosity in young girls which could lead quite naturally into aptitude for science.

Girls also enjoyed working in groups to explore the CSW statements about the Millennium Goals at the Girls’ Caucus. Each group had a chance to add their opinion to what has already been written for inclusion in the official statement of this year’s Commission. They spoke of the resources that should be available to girls, of ways that the social environment can be strengthened to include girls on a basis of equality, and of the need to gather information about girls in unbiased ways.

The day ended with an event entitled, “Walking on the Edge of Change.” Mckayla Menyah, a freshman at AMSU, presented her “spoken word” about living authentically out of one’s ethnicity. This was followed by a panel of girls sharing their experiences of speaking up for girls in Michigan, Mozambique, Portugal and the immigrant community right here in New York. They shared a visual exploration of the statement, “Why I am a Feminist!”

On Tuesday a panel of girls spoke about women in politics. These panelists urged all girls to be engaged in representing girls’ and women’s needs in society. The students spoke of traveling to other countries, of organizations like the Model UN that helps girls reflect on conditions in other places, and of the experience of being a girl advocate at the UN. They also shared some advocacy attempts which have proven to be effective. Spark is an organization which has made a huge effort to deal with and minimize sexualized images in the media. They encouraged girls to do what they love to do and to refuse to let their voices be marginalized. In many ways they said, “When you are serious you will be taken seriously.” “You are significant and can create change.” “What you say will have a ripple effect for good.”

On Wednesday, the Working Group On Girls, together with the Canadian Mission hosted a panel at the Turkish Mission. The most
Kayla and Karla Ortz ‘15, have been volunteering in the surrounding community since their freshmen year at AMSU. The majority of their service hours have been provided to the Fordham Bedford Community Services (FBCS), a non-profit organization founded by the Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation. They are committed to serving the children and families of the Northwest Bronx and its surrounding areas. FBCS seeks new and innovative ways to strengthen families by providing a variety of programs and services. In partnership with the community and other local not-for-profit organizations, Children’s Services is addressing the ever changing needs of a community that has long been neglected.

Kayla and Karla also volunteer at the Exceptional Children’s Program, established during the 1960s by Monsignor Vic Pavis, former principal of Cardinal Hayes High School. This program is for local group homes of mentally and physically challenged adults. The Exceptional Children’s Program meets at Hayes twice a month on Sundays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Hayes and AMSU students volunteer their time to serve as guides and chaperones for the adults as part of their community service. They participate in helping the adults with arts and crafts as well as physical education activities in the gym. The program begins with a Mass in the Hayes Chapel which is usually celebrated by Father Tierney or Father Burke.

On Thursday there was a session led by Plan International and participants were led through four exercises used by P.I. to help people understand, more than just intellectually, about the concerns of girls worldwide. By the end of the day attendees had walked in the footsteps of other girls, compared differing levels of violence against girls, considered laws of immigration from many different angles and realized in a felt sense what some statistics about girls really mean.

On Friday all attended an event entitled, “Sacred Activism.” An international, intergenerational group of women offered their insights and discussed how a deep spiritual life and self-awareness are essential for carrying on effective transformative action supporting the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. This was a wonderfully prayerful way to end the CSW experience this year.

Kayla and Karla are the 2014 Serviam Leaders with 261 Hours
Mother-Daughter Mass and Breakfast

On Sunday May 4th, AMSU held its annual Mother-Daughter Mass and Breakfast at the school. A total of seventy mothers and daughters from each grade level attended. The Mass was celebrated by Fr. John Vigilanti. The Gospel was about Jesus appearing to two disciples on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection and how slow they were in recognizing him. Fr. John said in the homily, “Sometimes we are too slow in seeing and responding to the needs of those around us. Jesus does not hold it against us but through his mercy, and the breaking of bread we are fortified to respond to our sisters and brothers.” The best example of this was Jesus’ trust in Peter even after Peter denied he knew Jesus. The resurrected Lord constantly offers us an opportunity to be transformed and reborn.

After the Mass, mothers, daughters and staff enjoyed a scrumptious breakfast including eggs, french toast, bacon, sausage and hash browns.

Ms. Ruth Taveras facilitated a fashion show and musical performances for the remainder of the afternoon. AMSU students walked the runway wearing spring, Hollywood starlet and formal wear. In between each fashion presentation, Bushra Begum ’14 performed a spoken word dedicated to all mothers. Destiny Cruz ’15, and Emily Martinez ’15 performed Believe by Justin Bieber.

AMSU Juniors Gain Insight Into Career Paths

On May 1st, 2014, AMSU’s guidance department hosted a Career Day for the AMSU junior class. Among the attendees were professional women from various industries who spoke of their experiences and gave advice to the 11th graders. Alumnae speakers included: attorney, Lee Llambelis ’79; NBC producer, Michele Leone ’85; Director of Recruitment and Admissions, Julia Myers-Bartley ’85; College Professor, Dr. Rosemary Farley ’70; construction manager, Yahaira Vargas ’03; and dentist, Dr. Janet Keane ’74. Additionally, a few friends of AMSU were present: nurse, Jennifer Daley and FDNY Firefighters, Tracy Lewis and Sarinya Srisakul.

Each speaker discussed their daily procedures and long term career goals in great depth. They emphasized the importance of following their dreams in the career path they chose and how all students should do the same. AMSU alumnae made an extra effort to connect with their AMSU sisters in a personal way. Each speaker mentioned how balancing home life and a career can be a major challenge, but it is possible with hard work and dedication. After each presentation, students were given the opportunity to interact one-on-one with each career presenter.

Easter Mass at AMSU

On April 16th, AMSU students, faculty and a few alumnae gathered together in the chapel to pray and prepare one another for the mysteries of the Lord’s Passion and Death on the cross. As a community they witnessed the rite of election for Briann Sanchez ’17, who has entered the final phase in her journey towards the Easter sacraments. Fr. John Vigilanti presented the Gospel according to Mathew 26:14-25. During the homily, Fr. John spoke about the Last Supper and the account of Judas betraying Jesus. The message of the homily was presented so that we may all reflect on how we live our lives as followers of Jesus Christ.
Senior Retreat - The Courage to Become

From Friday, April 4th through Sunday the 6th, AMSU seniors enjoyed a spiritually focused getaway at the Blaire House in Putnam Valley, NY. AMSU faculty members Laura Mulholland and Jillian McCoy, Dean of Student Affairs, Jeanne DiBenedetto, and Nicole Smith ’12 spent the weekend bonding with the students. The seniors spent most of their time with fellow sisters, mending relationships and progressing towards healing from the loss of loved ones. The theme of the weekend was, “The Courage to Become!” The girls opened up to one another about some of their thoughts concerning entering college in the fall and getting out into the real world. AMSU seniors pondered the thought of “God’s plan” vs. “our plan” for their lives and concluded that ultimately they would need to submit to His plan. Senior Clarisa Blancourt said, “If you gathered all the tears shed during the retreat, you could fill a small river. Tears of Joy and Healing!”

Fr. John Vigilanti came to the retreat house to say Mass on Saturday evening. The service was fitting considering the retreat was around the time of Easter and the topic of the Mass was on the Resurrection and hope in Christ.

YouthCan Conference 2014 - Protecting Our Biodiversity Among Us

YouthCan is a youth-run organization that uses technology to inspire, connect, and educate people worldwide about environmental issues and is endorsed by the Environmental Education Advisory Council, NY Marine Education Association and the John Burroughs Association. The purpose of the YouthCan Conference is to enable environmentally active youth to exchange ideas about the environment and empower others to make a difference in their own communities worldwide.

The AMSU Eco-Sci club participated in three workshops throughout the day. The first workshop consisted of a Skype session with students from the Philippines titled, “Feasibility of Pandan Leaves Extract.” Students enjoyed the videoconference as they discussed the role of insects in their country. They also shared information about relief projects where they are able to create a paste from recycled cigarette filters. During the second workshop, AMSU seniors, Felicia Coleman and Caitlin Harrison gave a compelling PowerPoint presentation called, “Out of the City and into the Wild.” They discussed the biodiversity in parks including Bear Mountain, Fort Tryon, Glenn Island Park, Pelham Bay, the Cloisters, Wolfs Pond, and Van Cortlandt. Keane University faculty presented the final workshop which was on Robotics.

This spring, 14 AMSU students from the Eco-Sci club along with Dean of Student Affairs, Ms. Jeanne DiBenedetto and Science Teacher, Aroon Rampersaud, attended the YouthCan 2014 Conference. YouthCan 2014 was sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History’s Department of Education, iEARN, and Caretakers of the Environment International/USA. Middle and high school students from Algeria, Columbia, Kazakhstan, Russia, the United States and all over the world attended the conference. Some even attended remotely through Skype.
In Loving Memory of our dear sister, Zuleimi Fabiola Torres, AMSU held a memorial service on May 16th at 3pm. Zuleimi’s parents and several family members were present. The students, Liturgy Club, and faculty gathered together to remember Zuleimi in a special way. After the memorial service, Akilah Brown ’14, Zuleimi’s best friend since elementary school, and Chelsea Antwi ’14 presented a slide show about Zuleimi.
As a small token of appreciation to donors, AMSU’s annual benefactor’s breakfast was held on Thursday, May 29th. AMSU benefactors attended Mass celebrated by Fr. John Vigilanti in the chapel. Afterwards, breakfast was served in the convent parlors. Among the AMSU benefactors in attendance were: Judy Coyle Boyle ’57 (in photo above with her students), Theresa Buoninfante, Margaret Casey ’56, Joan Cashman ’47, Susan McCarthy Cronin ’65, Marie Houlihan, Fred Kopilak, Jacquelyn Kunhardt and Vanessa Luciano from “Be-a-Student’s Friend,” Martha McDermott an SSP Mentor, Debra Kieman O’Connor ’77, Sophia Popova, SSP Mentor, Kathleen Treanor Tashner ’59, Jack Verrier, and Joan O’Meara Winant ’69.
Alumnae Reunion for 4s and 9s

On Saturday, March 29th, the Classes ending in 4s and 9s celebrated the anniversary of their graduation from AMSU. The school building was open in the morning for alumnae wishing to visit their alma mater. At noon, alumnae attended a cocktail reception, luncheon and Mass at the Davenport Club in New Rochelle.

This year’s reunion class coordinators were: Veronica Daly Davison ’44, Ursula Hutchinson Burke ’59, Sr. Geraldine Kennedy, OSU ’59, Patricia Ryan MacDonald ’59, Kay Treanor Tashner ’59, Marguerite Crowley Weibel ’64, Barbara Montenero DeAngelo ’69, Joan O’Meara Winant ’69, Regina Shannon Bodnar ’74, Gianna Dell’Olio ’89, Alesha Tyson ’94, Cecilia Granda ’99 and Amy Malave-Dodwell ’99. We appreciate all their work in promoting the reunion and soliciting their classmates for class gifts. The Class of 1964 raised $16,780 which was the highest amount raise by a class! In total $34,747 was raised by all classes. What a wonderful gift to AMSU!

For the past seven years, the AMSU Serviam Award has been presented to a number of distinguished alumnae who have truly embodied the spirit of Serviam. Many alumnae do so much in their communities and for AMSU. This year two alumnae were honored who have kept AMSU close to their hearts and have been a constant presence in the lives of our current students. Anna Parra presented this year’s Serviam Award to Joan O’Meara Winant ’69 and Barbara Montenero DeAngelo ’69, (photo above) for their dedication to the mission of AMSU. We are extremely grateful for all they do!

Her 75th reunion from the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. Mrs. Deegan was among two hundred alumnae from classes ending in 4s and 9s. Throughout the reunion celebration, Mrs. Deegan shared stories of her high school experience at AMSU and proudly showed off her yearbook and class ring from 1939. Julia celebrated her 92nd birthday in February 2014. She was presented with a special gift of AMSU memorabilia to add to her collection. Photos from the reunion can be seen at https://amsupictures.shutterfly.com/

Shop at AmazonSmile
and Amazon will make a donation to the:
Academy of Mount St. Ursula
visit www.amsu.org

masquerade
Salsa and Chips
October 24, 2014
Davenport Club,
New Rochelle
Tickets $75 per person
save the date
Sr. Jane Finnerty, OSU ’61 elected Provincial Prioress

At a Provincial Chapter held on February 8, 2014, the Roman Union Ursulines of the Eastern Province elected a new Provincial Prioress and Provincial Council. Sr. Jane Finnerty, OSU ’61 who had been serving on the Provincial Council, was elected Provincial. She succeeds Sr. Mary Sullivan. The newly elected provincial and councilors assumed office on May 1. Sr. Jane’s recent previous ministries, besides those in province roles, include Pastoral Associate/Religious Education Coordinator at St. John the Baptist Parish in Yonkers; Executive Director of the Religious Formation Conference National Office in Washington, DC, and Tertian Directress for the Ursulines, in Rome.

The newly elected Provincial Councilors are Sr. Ann Peterson, OSU currently serving on the present Provincial Council; Sr. Patricia Russell, OSU ’60 currently Owners Representative for Property Development and Leasing for the province; Sr. Joan Woodcome, OSU Director of Special Projects at The Ursuline School in New Rochelle; and Sr. Maureen Welch, OSU Assistant Director of the Partnership for Global Justice, an NGO at the UN.

Anne Byrne ’60, elected National School Board Association President

Congratulations to Anne Byrne on being elected President of the National School Board Association! Anne began her career in 1981 in the Nanuet Central Schools, at the state and now on a national level. This was a progression she did not foresee, but she really loves being in a leadership position. Anne believes that, “you can really effectuate change in what happens in the schools and in the classrooms. I have always been about student achievement since the first day I came on board, so my theme, and I have my pin on here, is leading children to excellence.” It was her theme when she was president of the NYS school board and now it is her theme as President of the National School Board Association. She tries to focus in on low performing school districts because she thinks that if they make sure that each child, no matter where they live, whether it be in the cities, rural areas, or the suburbs, have the opportunity to become successful, then every school and every child is successful.

Sr. Eileen Finnerty, OSU ’58 celebrates 50th Anniversary

Sr. Eileen Finnerty, OSU ’58 made her first profession on March 17, 1964, and her final vows on March 17, 1969. After obtaining her BS and MS in French from Georgetown University, she began her ministry in education at Blessed Sacrament School in New Rochelle. In 1969 she taught at St. Philip Neri and then at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, from 1970-1975. She was principal of AMSU from 1975-1981. She then did administrative work at the provincialate, and for the next four years she was a guidance counselor at The Ursuline School in New Rochelle. Sr. Eileen also was superior of the community from 1986-1988.

In 1987 Sr. Eileen earned an MS in Family Counseling at Iona College. She then became chaplain at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center, where she served until 1996. Soon after, she became Pastoral Associate at St. Ann’s Church in Ossining, where she continues to serve.
CLASS NOTES

Class of 1959

Josephine Nassisi Masulli hosted a luncheon for Dolores Castaldo Corini and her sister, Elaine Castaldo Sackmann '61. Josephine’s sister, Theresa Nassisi Helbeck ’54 and her husband, and their brother, Tom, were also there. But the true guests of honor were Josephine’s mom (age 99) and dad (age 100)! Josephine’s dad used to drive Dolores (and Elaine when she came to AMSU) across the park to school every morning. There was much catching up as everyone shared what had been going over these more than fifty years. And there were even more memories of AMSU days recounted. It is an understatement to say a wonderful time was had by all!

The Class of 1977 had a Reunion in Texas in April: left to right Joanne Cunniff Mason, Denise McGuire Sanabria and Laurie May Lutz.

Class of 1979

Camille DeSantis was recently honored as a 2014 Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association Luminary at the 25th anniversary HBA's Woman of the Year (WOTY) event, on Thursday, May 1st, in New York City. The HBA honored 25 past Rising Stars who have made a significant impact on the healthcare industry and/or experienced significant career advancement since receiving their Rising Star award. Camille also received certification this year as a Certified Net Promoter® Associate for her expertise in customer experience, mapping and planning. Ms. DeSantis is the co-founder, chief of brand strategy, and director of client services of Guard Dog Brand Development. Throughout her distinguished career, she has held executive-level positions at some of the industry’s leading organizations and has successfully developed numerous brands for well-known corporations, franchises, hospital/health systems, and products in the US and abroad. Camille is the creator of the proprietary and proven brand identity development process called GUARD™, and the proprietary research methodologies, the Corporate Image Perceptual Index™ (CIPI™), and the Asymmetric Information Dynamic Ratio™ (AID Ratio™).

Class of 1983

Brenda L. Torres (Rivera) is a widow and single mother of two young boys who are honor students and excellent athletes. She currently works as a court attorney in the Bronx and is running as a Democrat for the position of Bronx County Civil Court Judge. “To my Ursula Family in the Bronx, please come out and vote for me on Sept. 9.” For more information, please contact brivera116@hotmail.com.

Class of 1993

Kimberly Brown would like announce the birth of her first child, Kennedy Samaya who was born May 19 at 5:01 pm.

Class of 1997

Zoe Colon, Executive Director of the Hispanic Resource Center, accepted the Community Service Award at the Hispanic Federation’s annual gala at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City. The Federation’s president, Jose Calderon, said in a recent Journal News article, “Our
2014 honorees embody the very ideals of determination, impact and greatness that inspire us to imagine and create a vibrant Latino community for generations to come."

The article also quotes Zoe as saying, “The Hispanic Federation provides incredible support to the Latino community from capacity building programs to statewide campaigns that address the multifaceted needs of our community.”

Class of 1999 (photo above)
On Sunday, February 23rd, the Class of 1999 held a brunch at AMSU to collaborate on fundraising strategies to sponsor SSP seniors from Mother Cabrini High School. Twenty-five alumnae, Ms. Kathy Corticcio and Ms. Linda Peri, attended the brunch in support of the fundraising efforts. Ms. Corticcio sold 14 DVDs for the Ring Day scholarship fund during the event. Some of the efforts of the Class of 1999 coordinators, Cecilia Granda and Amy Malave, included collecting donations, creating online fundraising pages, putting together mini-fundraising initiatives and selling candles. The Class of 1999 eagerly worked to raise a class gift of over $10,000 in just two months. Cecilia and Amy said, “The misfortune of Cabrini has opened the eyes of many, and we are grateful to those who are not willing to stand idle. AMSU is beloved and cherished by thousands of women. When we come together beautiful things happen. Be a part of our commitment; together we can make a difference!” Great job, ladies!

Class of 2005
Melissa Audain was tenured this year at her school, P.S. 176x in the Bronx, as a special education teacher. Congratulations, Melissa!

In Memoriam
Winifred Sieger Farrell ’44
Claire G. Doran
Beloved Mother of
Mary Anne Doran Denon ’57
Regina Doran Franco
Beloved Daughter of
Mary Anne Doran Denon ’57
Charles F. O’Donnell
Beloved Husband of
Mary Hehir O’Donnell ’57
Rachel Barbara Sherman
Beloved Sister of
Carole Ciccarone Mills ’58
Clare B. Freaney
Beloved Mother of
Mary Freaney Dooley ’60
Janet McDonald Harrison ’63
Rosemary Kelly
Beloved Mother of
Rosanne Kelly Kiely ’65
Patricia Kelly McCrodden ’68
Regina Kelly LaTourette ’80
Tracy-Marie Figueroa O’Leary ’87

Help us stay in touch!!! Email us your email at alumnae@amsu.org
Save the Date

OPEN HOUSE
Sunday, October 19, 2014