Dear Alums, Benefactors, and Friends:

It is amazing how I meet graduates of the school by chance regardless of the venue. Over the Christmas holiday I was having dinner with former parishioners of St. Bartholomew's Church in Yonkers at Crabtree's Kittle House in Chappaqua. As some of you know, John Crabtree's late wife, Amy Fioravante, was a graduate of AMSU ('74). During the course of our dinner I was approached by a young woman who was celebrating a family birthday, Maribel-Cruz Brown '94. My first question to any graduate of AMSU is straight-forward: Did you get a good education at AMSU? In my six years as president of AMSU the answer always has been a resounding YES! Maribel has been able to build on the wonderful foundation provided by our dedicated faculty and staff and the Ursuline tradition that has sustained generations of young women for close to 160 years. It is gratifying to know that our mission remains vibrant.

You should also know that we get very positive feedback from college presidents and professors about our graduates. Recently, a long-time member of the Manhattan College faculty wanted me to know that we are doing great work here at AMSU. The President of the College of Mount St. Vincent echoed those sentiments. Your interest and support of AMSU remains critical in helping us continue that unique tradition. Please share with us your stories and experiences. If you have a chance of spending some time at AMSU as a “shadow,” attending classes and activities, let me know. It is a wonderful way of connecting with your alma mater and meeting the young women being formed in the "Serviam" spirit.

Finally, let me say THANK YOU to those who have made a pledge to our campaign: Ensure Their Future. Your generosity and support of your alma mater are critical if we are to maintain this wonderful tradition. The families we serve seek a safe, solid, morally informed educational foundation for their daughters. However, for many, it comes at a price they cannot afford. Our tuition for 2014-2015 will be $7550, well below our actual cost of over $14,000 per student. 79% of our students receive financial assistance. Over 60% are eligible, by NYC standards, to receive free or reduced lunch. Your generosity and that of the Ursulines are the reason why we can look forward to our 160th anniversary. Also, a special THANK YOU to those alums who have been part of our AFFINITY program, financially assisting students who attend AMSU from the same parish schools those alums graduated from. At present, close to $100,000 has been donated each year to fund these awards. If you have not made a pledge or seek further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Sr. Kathleen Finnerty (718.364.5353, x 230).

I would like to personally thank the Ursuline Board of Members and the Board of Trustees for extending the term of board chair for Susan McCarthy Cronin ’65, until the completion of the Capital Campaign.

Sincerely,

Fr. John A. Vigilanti, Ed.D.
President
Dear Alumnae, Benefactors, and Friends,

As I sit down to write this letter, we are in the midst of our third major snowstorm of the year. The first semester of academic year 2013-2014 has come to a close, and a new one begins this very day. Mid-term examinations and January Regents examinations are complete. Students receive their first semester report cards today, and will be either rewarded with the fruits of their labors or faced with the reality of the need to labor just a little bit harder if any fruit is to be borne. This is the cycle of our academic life at AMSU. While there is comfort in its familiarity, the profile is never really the same at all. But no matter how it manifests itself, it is always interesting, and always noteworthy.

What can be relied upon with certainty is the focus we place on achieving our mission: preparing young women for college and empowering them to leadership. This is accomplished through both the formal and informal curriculum. As you turn the pages of this Take Note, you will be presented with the vibrancy of classroom and afterschool life and extra-curricular activities. What seems impossible to capture is all of the hard work and effort expended on the part of the students, faculty, and staff to arrive at these great successes.

I continue to be amazed at the level of commitment demonstrated by AMSU students. They invest in what inspires them, and when inspired, wonderful things happen – the proof is in the pictures!

Equally amazing are AMSU teachers who, unfortunately, have no photographic evidence to demonstrate how incredibly hard they work to ensure the success of every young woman. I will do my best to paint a vivid picture: Throughout this first semester, teachers have been engaged in various activities and professional development initiatives designed to prepare for the implementation of the new Common Core curriculum and corresponding state examinations this June. They have worked collaboratively to arrive at a new, standardized, school-wide grading policy to ensure consistency of student assessment. They are shifting to electronic grade-books in preparation for the opening of a student/parent portal in the fall of 2014. They are developing professionally through their own personal goals, and attending workshops to help them grow in their craft - all this, while teaching classes, grading papers, providing extra-help after school, and moderating extra-curricular activities.

Yet another certainty that can be relied upon is your continued support, which makes it easier to do what we do, despite the challenges. Thank you, as always.

Sincerely,
Lisa Harrison
Principal

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Message from the Executive Director

Dear Alumnae and Friends,

As many of you know we kicked off our “Ensure Their Future” capital campaign in November 2013. Alumnae have responded very positively. You will read about the campaign in this issue of Take Note. As we move forward with the campaign you will hear more about what is happening and our events planned to celebrate our 160th anniversary in 2015.

As of the end of February we have raised 50% of our Annual Appeal quota. Thank you so much if you have already made a commitment. If you have not, please consider making AMSU one of your top philanthropic commitments this year. Remember to check with your Human Resources department to find out if your employer participates in a matching gift program. Retirees should also inquire. You too can double or even triple your generosity. Charitable companies to AMSU are listed below.

As I was thinking of how to phase what your generosity means to AMSU, I felt this passage was appropriate: “True giving is a thoroughly joyous thing to do. We experience happiness when we form the intention to give, in the actual act of giving, and in the recollection of the fact that we have given. Generosity is a celebration. When we give something to someone we feel connected to them, and our commitment to the path of peace and awareness deepens.” -Sharon Salzberg

Your connection to the Academy of Mount St. Ursula and to its students is evident. The generosity of AMSU’s alumnae and friends has been truly overwhelming. The students know and feel this genuine gift of love. They know they are here because of you! Whether your connection to AMSU is because of a particular student, teacher, classmate or because the mission of the school remains close to your heart, we are extremely grateful for your commitment and trust in all we are doing here!

AMSU is planning a Salsa and Chips event in the fall of 2014 and our 160th anniversary celebration in 2015. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Anna E. Parra
Executive Director of Development

PS. In March, look for your Cinco de Mayo envelope in the mail!

**AMSU Launches $3 million Campaign to Ensure Their Future**

On Saturday, November 2, 2013 AMSU kicked-off the Ensure Their Future capital campaign with an event at AMSU. Alumnae and friends attended a Mass in the chapel which was followed by reception in the auditorium. The campaign was introduced by school leadership; Fr. John Vigilanti and Lisa Harrison. AMSU senior Josephine Nguyen also spoke about what AMSU means to her and how her sponsors, Jim and Judy Coyle Boyle ’57, have changed her life.

By embarking on this campaign to “Ensure Their Future,” the school is positioning AMSU for the celebration of its 160th year in 2015. In order to enable AMSU to advance its mission it is expanding its academic programs and increasing the ability to offer scholarship and financial aid to deserving students at all levels of financial need and academic ability. “The $3 million campaign goal positions AMSU for growth by meeting the following priorities to offer scholarships/financial aid to qualified students.

- **St. Angela Merici Scholars Program** for full and partial merit-based scholarships. These scholarships are offered to students with high scores on the TACHS entrance exam and their previous academic school record.

- **St. Ursula Financial Aid Program** for students with demonstrated financial need. Approximately 70% of AMSU’s current students receive financial aid. This aid is part of the school’s operating budget, and much of it comes from philanthropic sources.

- **The AMSU-designed STAR Program** (Students and Teachers Aiming and Reaching). This program assists students who need additional academic support in order to reach their full potential.

A Campaign Committee has been assembled and they are volunteering to help “ensure” the campaign is a great success. Our committee members are Susan McCarthy Cronin ’65, Debra Kiernan O’Connor ’77, Barbara Montenero DeAngelo ’69 and Joan O’Meara Winant ’69. They attend monthly campaign meetings, assist in campaign activities and are helping to identify other possible campaign volunteers.

More pictures from the event can be seen on our Shutterfly account by visiting AMSU.org and clicking the link for Alumnae Pictures in the center column.

**An initial leadership gift of $500,000 and two gifts of $100,000 have positioned the school for a successful campaign. To date, we have raised $1.3 million in pledges so we are almost half way to our goal! With your help we will reach our goal to “Ensure Their Future!”**
A popular translation of some of Saint Angela Merici’s words of advice reads in part:

Do something
Get moving
Be confident
Risk new things
Stick with it
Get on your knees
Then be ready for
BIG SURPRISES!

Recently, two Major Surprises came our way. First, on January 16th, Mother Cabrini high school announced that it will be closing in June after 115 years of educating young women. At AMSU we were saddened to hear the news. Soon after, AMSU was approached by Student Sponsor Partners (SSP) to consider accepting 31 Cabrini SSP transfer students next year.

SSP is a privately funded philanthropic organization supporting students with financial need who desire to attend Catholic high school. Since there is a financial gap between what SSP provides ($4,100) and our tuition for next year of $7,550, we put out an appeal at the end of January to help us welcome these Cabrini students into next year’s senior and sophomore classes. The response was overwhelming! In four weeks we received $79,000! Our ability to accept these Cabrini SSP students is a win-win: Cabrini students finish their high school years in a Catholic school, and AMSU increases its present enrollment and positions itself for the future.

Now, we have a new challenge. Cabrini has roughly 36 students who are academic merit scholars. AMSU would like to be in a position to offer Cabrini scholarship students the opportunity to transfer to AMSU and keep their scholarships. The average scholarship is $3500. The goal is $125,000. The Class of 1999 has initiated their own fundraiser for this cause. The past generosity of AMSU alumnae, donors, and friends leaves no doubt that for such a worthy cause, this goal is achievable by the end of this school year.

Our recently initiated Capital Campaign for $3 million to honor the 160th anniversary of AMSU in 2015 makes provision for various forms of student aid. In addition to your consistent and loyal generosity, we are asking you to join our alumnae donors and the class of ’99 in making an extra sacrifice to fund this special AMSU Cabrini Scholarship appeal. This unexpected turn of events has provided AMSU with an opportunity to reach out to Cabrini and embrace them with our wonderful serviam spirit. We cannot afford to lose the momentum. Checks may be made out to AMSU with a Cabrini Academic Scholarship notation or you may make a donation online by selecting academic scholarships for the designation.

For more information please contact:

Fr. John Vigilanti – 718-364-2125
jvigilanti@amsu.org

Sr. Kathleen Finnerty, OSU – 718-364-5353, ext 230
kfinnerty@amsu.org

Anna Parra – 718-733-6249
aparra@amsu.org

Or visit: www.edline.net/pages/Academy_of_Mount_St_Ursula/Follow_AMSU/Campaign

“This campaign is about ensuring the future of AMSU. If one girl can get a chance, the same chance that I got as a student here, then it is all worth it. If they cannot get that chance from us, where are they going to get it from? We’ll be giving a young lady the opportunity to be a future leader in her community just as my classmates and I are today.”

- Francesca Kosick Bossey ’86
ACADEMICS

First in Excellence Awards - 2013-2014

Character of Excellence Awards

47% of students earned character excellence awards for the first quarter. Character excellence awards are conferred to students who have not received any demerit or detention in a given marking period.

Media Creation

Media creation and working in groups are integral parts of college and professional life. The use of technology at home and in the classroom has continued to grow exponentially and will most likely continue to shape our daily procedures, and impact our lives profoundly. Following useful trends and informing students through Media instruction is a necessity.

Introduction to Computers is a 9th grade class where students begin learning how to build their own websites. They are currently adding text and styling to their webpages. By the end of the school year, they will be able to have websites that contain color backgrounds, texts, images, videos, and sound.

The 12th grade Media Arts class is currently filming and editing commercials as their projects. These commercials are student written, directed, and edited. The commercials will be viewable on January 31st on Vimeo.com.

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

Grade 9:
First in Excellence: Chantel Brown;
Second in Excellence: Barbara Djan

Grade 10:
First in Excellence: Cinthia Ibarra;
Second in Excellence: Delia Cruz

Grade 11:
First in Excellence: Karla Ortiz;
Second in Excellence: Kathy Huot

Grade 12:
First in Excellence: Caitlin Harrison;
Second in Excellence: Anngelica Soto

29% of all students received First Honors for Quarter 1
29% of all students received Second Honors for Quarter 1
Freshmen PowerPoint Presentations

In December, AMSU teacher Ruth Taveras’ freshman class gave Power Point presentations on pathogens in the human body. Students presented the four types of pathogens with their corresponding diseases. The presentations were given in the AMSU auditorium. In preparation, Ms. Taveras coached the students on how to present themselves in a professional environment. Ms. Taveras was impressed by the communication skills of the freshmen which included: presentation abilities, technical abilities with the computer and peripheral equipment, public speaking, and non-verbal communication.

Most of the students were introduced to Microsoft Power Point for the first time. With time, students’ skills can be improved so that they can present information more efficiently and professionally. Some students may have experienced a bit of stage freight, but overall the freshman class did well.

Library Media Center Updates

► The Library Media Center has seen substantial growth in many areas. Library Council members more than doubled since 2012. The iPad apps available to the students include iTunes U, NYPL Biblion, Science 360, Stats of the Union, Today’s Document from the National Archives, Congressional Record, Zite, Flipboard, and Spanish and Italian dictionary apps, with new apps being added on a continuous basis. The amount of Ebooks have increased, adding new encyclopedias, and multiset books. Students have the convenience of accessing the library systems from virtually anywhere.

► Students and teachers participated in a Hunger Games competition during the month of November which also increased book circulation by 90%. Half of the faculty and 46% of the student population participated in the event. Media teacher, Mr. Henry Triana and Library Media Specialist, Jillian McCoy collaborated on a freshman technology class. The class focused on how to utilize essential scholarly databases and site resources for students to reference when writing research papers.

► The collaboration between Library and Media is becoming more common within the K - 12 school system because of the exponential growth in today’s technology. The databases are all provided by Gale, Infobase, and Grolier, and include encyclopedia entries, newspaper indexes, journals, essays, and articles on a wide variety of academic subjects. The database usage has increased by 40% since last year.

“For the project that was given to Biology Honors period 2 by Ms. Taveras, I had researched AIDS. The preparation was enjoyable and informative; however, for the presentation I was nervous, but quickly got over my nerves and had fun with it.”

- Kayla Bentham ‘17
**Visual Arts**

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**Senior Projects**

Seniors Brianna Quiroz and Yasmine Fuentes (photo shown above from left to right) are continuing the series of Studio Art *Got Character* murals which began in 2011 at AMSU. This year’s addition to the collection is the Maya Lin mural on the third floor. Maya Lin is a world renowned architect who designed the Vietnam War Memorial, The Civil Rights Memorial and the Woman’s Table at Yale. Last year’s addition was a mural of Desmond Doss. Mr. Doss is a Medal of Honor recipient in the Second World War. Desmond Doss refused to violate any of the Ten Commandments and so as a medic he went to war to save lives with the courage he received from his faith. The Mural was painted by Seniors Zuri Mena and Asia Epps Forrest.

The purpose of the murals is to provide pictorial and narrative examples of individuals with strong character beating the odds and attaining individual achievements that serve humanity and culture.

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Seniors Zuri Mena, Yazmine Fuentes and Brianna Quiroz have completed their contribution to the school’s permanent collection, a requirement of participation in the art academy program. All senior art academy students are required to submit a religious subject drawing or painting for the school’s permanent collection. The submission is to demonstrate the student’s skill level as well as a permanent recognition of the student’s participation in the school’s highest art program.

**Color Theory through Artist Paul Signac**

The studio art class is learning the complexities of color through the pointillist work of Paul Signac. Small dots of color are applied to their selected painting. At a short distance the eye visually mixes the dots into a complex blended color. By doing this, the students will acquire the knowledge to mix colors in a more traditional, non pointillist fashion. The process is to change the way the student sees and thinks about color.

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**Art Academy 1 and 2**

Art Academy 1 and 2 are fundamental drawing technique classes that teach students how to measure, render and translate three dimensional objects into a two dimensional format. They begin by developing the sensitive touch, drawing stroke and value control and geometric drawing. These developed and learned skills are then used on more complex forms requiring a more intricate technique of a system of complex planes. This stage of development is illustrated by the work of
sophomores Skaila Pyatt ‘16 and Anne Calbitaza ‘16. After the mastery of measuring and form, the learned skills are applied to portraiture, which is more challenging than object still life drawing. In portraiture, if the measurements are incorrect or the planes misapplied, mistakes are readily noticeable. The face and the human form is the most difficult for the artist to master. Skaila Pyatt ‘16 provides an example of her work in progress as shown in bottom right hand corner of this page.

Painting by Asia Alexander ’14

Charcoal sketch by Yazmine Fuentes ’14

Portrait of a Jesus statue by Zuri Mena ’14

Portraiture by Skaila Pyatt ’16
Performing Arts

Music Program
Throughout the school year the girls of AMSU study and prepare for various musical ensembles and theatrical events. Some of the helpful tools include Smartboard technology, which has helped to increase productivity in the classroom. The music program uses the Smartboard to teach music theory, create slides, utilize the interactive features, watch jazz and classical performers, and other online resources on Youtube. The Smartboard helps tremendously while working through jazz units in the course material. Music Teacher, Ms. Laura Mullholland, would like to follow the technological trends by assigning projects in a Midi based software called Garage Band in the near future.

International Night
This year’s International Night was a product of hard work and creativity! The Senior class truly took the reigns and began preparing their dances and acts in the beginning of September. One special act in particular was the debut of AMSU’s Vocal Techniques Class, which sang a 1960’s Diana Ross Tribute in harmony. Additionally, AMSU’s Acting class researched and performed a skit on an Indian folk tale. Each student brought in a folk tale from her own tradition and presented to the class. The class then collaborated on which act to perform. The folk tale was written and directed by the students who also came up with the customs to perform during the act. The skit included a traditional Indian dance choreographed by the students. All elements of good acting were incorporated along with good stage design.

Christmas Concert
This year’s Christmas Concert had a Jazz theme. AMSU had the privilege of having Jeffrey Hoffman, a freelance professional pianist, perform on the piano throughout the entire concert. The performance included Jazz Standards and Swing hits such as Cool You by Louie Armstrong and In the Mood by the Glenn Miller Orchestra, performed by sophomores. Students applied vocal techniques learned in class to the Christmas Concert performance. Vocal Techniques class performed a difficult three part harmony version of Jingle Bells. Students in the Juilliard Educational Outreach Arts Enrichment Fellowship performed Silent Night and Oh Come All Ye Faithful.

Theater
This school year the AMSU theater class has been working with TDF (Theater Development Fund), to write plays. So far, students have written a 10 page scene with the assistance of TDF. Noel Gusani, a TDF Teaching Artist, Playwright and Director from New York City, has been visiting AMSU every week assisting theater students. Once a week students write the plays as a part of their Midterm. After each student’s play has been written, four to five plays will be chosen for professional NYC actors to visit AMSU and read the student written plays. TDF offers their expertise at no cost to public high schools within the five boroughs of New York City; Residency Arts Project and Stage Doors align with a number of the theatre benchmarks from the New York City Department of Education’s Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts.
Residency Arts Project

An intensive program that integrates teaching artists into a classroom for 24 sessions that result in a final performance of original work. Developed in response to the need for curriculum-based arts programming, TDF’s Residency Arts Project introduces the craft of playwriting to young people who have little or no prior exposure to theatre. The project consists of a series of workshops led by a teaching artist, using professional productions as models for student work. The teaching artist and classroom teacher collaborate to develop a sequence of workshops that best serve their students.

Stage Doors

Teaching artists collaborate with classroom teachers to develop a series of eight in-class sessions to prepare students for an engaged theatre experience.

Stage Doors is a project-based arts education program that provides New York City middle and high school students with an in-depth introduction to live theatre. Each class attends a Broadway or Off-Broadway performance and participates in eight in-class workshops. Four of the workshops are conducted by a guest teaching artist and four by the classroom teacher. The workshops engage students in discussion, writing, reading and improvisation to prepare them for their experience at the theatre.

Madama Butterfly

In January, twenty members of Ms. Laura Mulholland’s Vocal Technique’s class attended the final dress rehearsal of the Met’s production of Madama Butterfly, accompanied by Ms. DiBenedetto, Dean of Student Affairs, and Fr. John Vigilanti, President. The students were treated not only to the beautiful music of Puccini, but also to an endearing and captivating vocal rendition of the leading roles of Butterfly and Pinkerton. The production displayed a spectacular and creative use of costume, lighting, and staging. Two former and actively involved alumnae, on college break, joined the students: Nicole Smith ’12 and Aleysha Taveras ’12.

Spring Musical – In The Heights

Rehearsals for the spring musical In the Heights began on Friday, January 10th. Students started off with a rousing dance rehearsal, led by Alum choreographer, Ened Fredrick ’12. Ms. DiBenedetto, accompanied by four AMSU senior actresses, held a recruiting meeting at All Hallows High School, which resulted in 16 boys auditioning for the show! AMSU is fortunate to partner with talented students from All Hallows, Fordham Prep and Mount. St. Michael. Please join us in cheering on students. Save the Dates - March 28, 29 at 7:30 pm and March 30th 2pm!

L’Eliser D’Amore

The entire sophomore class had the opportunity to attend the final dress rehearsal performance of the Metropolitan Opera’s production of Gaetano Donizetti’s L’Eliser D’Amore. The class travelled by subway to Columbus Circle and walked the brief distance to Lincoln Center. They were chaperoned by Ms. Laura Mulholland, music teacher, Jeanne Di Benedetto, Dean of Student Affairs, Jillian McCoy, Library Media Specialist, and Henry Triana, Media Arts teacher. Fr. John Vigilanti went along for the ride. Lunch was held in the Grand Tier lobby, “picnic” style. One focus of The Metropolitan Opera Guild is to introduce students from various New York City schools to this unique musical tradition. In the past students attended Benjamin Britten’s Billy Budd and Shostakovich’s The Nose. Since many operas deal with themes of betrayal, violence, and death, L’Eliser D’Amore was the right tonic for a winter’s day.
Volleyball
“We are undefeated division champions. We won every game in our division and skipped the playoffs to go straight to the semi-finals. We lost our semi-final game. It was a 3/5 game and we won only one out of the three. The game was played in Sacred Heart High School. We had a great season”

- Ms. Ruth Taveras

Cheerleading - By Asia Alexander ‘14
At AMSU, cheerleading is the sport in which spirit and joy is spread throughout the school community, particularly for our basketball team. The AMSU cheerleading team was started last year and since then we have continued to provide inspiration to our fellow students and faculty. Having participated in a pep rally, open house, home basketball games and other school events; cheering is our way of showing that no matter what, we are one big community. Teamwork and spirit are what the AMSU cheerleaders strive
In the Spirit... Week
On Monday, December 9th, the girls of AMSU kicked off spirit week. Throughout the entire week, students, teachers and staff participated in activities which helped promote goodwill towards others. Some activities included: a coat drive, fundraising for the victims of the typhoon in the Philippines, an over-the-top Pep Rally followed by an evening Basketball game against St Raymond’s, Dress Like Your Teacher Day, Twin Day, and Wack-Tacky Dress Day. Many of AMSU’s talented musicians and vocalists finished off the fun filled week performing in the Christmas Open Mic. Students from each grade level performed various songs from an assortment of genres.

Varsity Basketball
The special nature of this season did not hit me until our playoff game. It was my last year to play on the AMSU court with an AMSU uniform on. I’ve played for the last four years and I still can recall memorable moments from each season. Being captain also made this a special season. I was able to lead my team while playing a sport that I love. Getting back to the playoffs was especially exciting for me and my team. I truly enjoyed being apart of this team and I want to thank all of the girls who dedicated their effort and time to play. I want to also acknowledge Wendy Koranteng, who is my co-captain and best friend, for always being on the same page with me. I also want to thank our coach, Tara Harrison, for helping to push us even when we were extremely tired and wanted to quit. I am also grateful for our managers and my other best friends: Felicia Coleman, Ashley Nunez, and Nya Vincent, for their help throughout the season. With the combined efforts of the girls and our coach, we were able to come in third in our division. This was definitely a season to remember and whether we were complaining about running or quacking to get hype, I am happy with the way my last season played out. I am hoping to play ball in college either on a team or intramural so my career is not over. However, I am immensely grateful my time and the people I have met here at AMSU.

- Caitlin Harrison

Ursuline Tournament at The College of New Rochelle
The AMSU basketball team also competed in a Ursuline tournament at the College of New Rochelle in February. The tournament included The Ursuline School in New Rochelle, as well as teams from Ursuline Academies in St. Louis, MI, Dedham, MA and Wilmington, DE.
Seniors Melvina Amamoo and Janae Williams spent time in Italy last summer as members of People to People. They lived with a family and worked with other young people to enhance park areas. Both learned a great deal about the Italian culture and spoke warmly about the wonderful hospitality they received. While language presented a great challenge, they used sign language and Google to bridge that gap. Melvina said that even though they were not able to speak at great length, so much about the way students spoke to and treated each other, conveying open and engaging spirits, brought them together in friendship.

Senior Sorinil Barea spent time three days a week for two years helping the Institute for the Puerto Rican Heritage and Elderly (IPRHE). Here she helped many people fill out applications for citizenship and for benefits. She spoke of the humbling privilege of learning about the struggles of so many. She has grown in patriotism and is so proud to have helped so many to become citizens and to increase the beauty and strength of our country.

Ms. Gaviria, co-moderator of Student Council at TUS, and ten Ursuline girls, spent the day at AMSU. The girls included: Isabella D'Addario ’16, Nia Joy Harvey ’16, Holly Lombino ’17, Lia Lombino ’14, Saidi Moseley ’16, Maya Palmer ’14, Shannon Powell ’14, Alyssia Rentas ’15, Clare Ryan ’16, and Kay Woodti ’17.

AMSU Dean of Student Affairs, Ms. Jeanne DiBenedetto, and ten AMSU girls spent the day at TUS. Sonia Ahmad ’15, Valerie Blain ’16, Daniela Cabral ’14, Joselyn Garcia ’16, Cinthia Ibarra ’16, Adrena Lambert ’16, Kendra Patrick ’16, Laura Paulina ’14, Samiha Rahman ’14, and Tasnia Syed ’15 were in attendance.

“Being given the opportunity to visit the Ursuline school was a wonderful experience. I learned of their traditions, academics, and athletics that were very unique.”

- Daniela Cabral ’14
AMSU students and teachers participated in an annual service day throughout the Bronx on November 26th. The most popular project this year was the “Holiday Cards for Heroes,” which took place at AMSU. Over 150 students and faculty members participated in making Christmas cards for Veteran and deployed soldiers. Over 300 cards were sent to the Red Cross for distribution to our troops!

Students at AMSU are expected to give at least ten hours of service during each year of their high school experience. Students who give fifty or more hours of service are honored at our assemblies and given a certificate.

There are many places close to AMSU that appreciate the help of our students. Serviam Gardens, the Senior Center on 204th Street established by Sr. Annunciata Bethell, O.S.U. ‘31, Rose Hill Apartments and Edison Arms offer students the opportunity to interact with senior citizens. Students also interact with children at Concourse House and Our Lady of Refuge school, assisting children with homework. One of the most rewarding service locations includes Part of the Solution. POTS is a nearby soup kitchen that offers many services to the homeless. The girls at AMSU learn valuable lessons and feel rewarded while helping those who have many struggles throughout their daily lives.

Many students find places of service in their church communities and local areas. Some have joined organizations like People to People, which offer students the opportunity to serve abroad.

With the combined efforts in service, instruction in social justice classes, involvement with the United Nations: Working Group on Girls, we hope to instill a lifelong commitment to community service in the students of AMSU.

“During November the Serviam Leaders organized the school-wide food collection for POTS pantry. They worked on counting and packing the food for delivery to POTS on Service Day. This year’s collection was the best in years. The student body donated 925 cans of food.”

- Sr. Barbara Calamari, O.S.U. Serviam Leaders Coordinator

“The students were positive, enthusiastic, energetic and eager to serve at POTS. Several students even commented on the fact that it made them even more appreciative of what they have when they see so many people who have so much less. Sometimes you don’t appreciate what you have until it is no longer there. Hence, we give thanks to God when we serve others!”

- Vincent Amendola
AMSU Religion Teacher

“Service Day
During November the Serviam Leaders organized the school-wide food collection for POTS pantry. They worked on counting and packing the food for delivery to POTS on Service Day. This year’s collection was the best in years. The student body donated 925 cans of food.”

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-Vincent Amendola
AMSU Religion Teacher

Ms. Kathy Corticcio with AMSU sophomores at POTS Soup Kitchen
AMSU EVENTS

**Wacky-Tacky Dress Day**

**Ring Day**

**Junior - Freshmen Picnic**

**College Fair**

**Pep Rally**

**UN Visit**

**Ursuline Visit**

**Junior Retreat**
Lee Llambelis, Esq. ’79 is the Special Assistant District Attorney for Community Affairs at the New York County District Attorney’s Office, where she is responsible for the Office’s community outreach efforts and partnerships. The Office’s primary focus is on youth engagement, ethnic minorities, schools, seniors, immigrants, and the crime victims’ community. Ms. Llambelis also works with groups that provide services to immigrants that address the alarming increase in fraudulent immigration services directed at some of our most vulnerable non-English-speaking residents.

She has served as Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs for the Office of the New York State Attorney General where, as member of Attorney General Andrew Cuomo’s executive staff, she was responsible for the office’s community outreach efforts. Ms. Llambelis has served as Litigation Director for the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, where she engaged in litigation, advocacy, and policy development on civil rights issues affecting Latinos in the United States. She has also served as General Counsel to Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr. where she advised the Borough President on legal and labor matters and represented the Borough President on Boards and Committees—including but not limited to the New York City Retirement Systems Board and the Bronx Initiative Corporation Board. She also drafted and delivered testimony for the Borough President at public hearings on matters of concern to the Borough. Ms. Llambelis served as Director of Government and Community Relations at the New York Botanical Garden, where she coordinated relations with city, state and federal agencies and elected officials and dealings with the local community. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Llambelis served as an Assistant Press Secretary to Mayor Edward I. Koch. Ms. Llambelis earned her JD from the Georgetown University Law Center and holds a BS in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. She has also been a Coro Foundation Fellow in Public Affairs and was an exchange student at La Universidad de Los Andes in Bogota, Colombia. Ms. Llambelis was raised in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx.

“At Mt. St. Ursula my classmates and I came to fully grasp that the world was ours for the taking. It was also there where it was impressed upon us that with the gift of knowledge came responsibility and we had a responsibility to give back to our respective communities.”

- Lee Llambelis ’79

SSP Alumnae Mentors

At the SSP opening dinner in October, 13 AMSU Alumnae mentors were in attendance to meet their students. We are grateful to all our alumnae who participate in the Student Sponsor Partners (SSP) program.
1952
Elynore Clark Cucinell MD, Col. (R) USA – Her story is in honor of Mother St. Pierre (Sister Eleanor Drury, OSU, MSU ‘29). She would never have gone to medical school without her advice. Elynore was one of a small number of girls who attended MSU grammar school in the 1940s as part of a program in which they graduated from grammar school after 6 years rather than the usual 8. As a Senior in 1951, she was going to graduate from MSU HS at age 15. Those students in the program were 2 years younger than everybody else in the class, well schooled, but generally unprepared for life in terms of maturity. They stuck out like sore thumbs. Mother St. Pierre recognized how immature Elynore was and suggested that she take another year in HS. She took lots of extra English and History, found a lifetime love of literature and grew up a bit. Elynore graduated in 1952 instead and went on to Marymount Manhattan College and Albany Medical College ‘60,1 of 3 women in the class. She did not think she would have had a fighting chance without the advice and love from Mother St Pierre. She taught so many to reach out and attempt what seemed impossible. “I revere her memory, her social consciousness and her common sense. In my mind and prayers I have thanked her all the rest of my life.”

Sr. Anne Ryan, PBVM – She is currently a consultant with the Catechetical Office of the Archdiocese of New York, assisting the Director in assuring that children with special needs, particularly those children with Autism, are receiving Religious Education and Sacramental preparation. In addition, Sr. Anne is a volunteer with Hospice of Orange and Sullivan County in New York.

1954

1955
Katherine (Kitty) Santone Laporta - on October 6, 2013, she was married at Manhattanville College (her alma mater) to Alfred LaPorta. His first wife died as did Katherine’s first husband. Alfred was married to her sister’s best friend, so they have known each other for about 60 years...and interestingly each went to the other’s wedding: she to his in 1957 and he to hers in 1965. They will keep her apartment in NYC and his house in Croton-on-Hudson in Westchester County...and spend winters in Naples, Florida. Katherine will continue as a volunteer weekend docent in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. “He’s a wonderful man and I am a happy, lucky lady. Life is good!” Katherine’s oldest friend, Maureen Moran Doherty (also class of 1955) attended the wedding with her husband, Paul, and three of her five children, and did a reading in church. Of course she sat at the bridal table...

1956
Sr. Kathleen Finnerty, OSU, has joined the AMSU community as the Assistant to the President for the Capital Campaign. In addition to her work at AMSU, Sr. Kathleen serves on the Board of Trustees of the College of New Rochelle and Iona Preparatory School. Sr. Kathleen has commented that her work at AMSU has made her very aware that “the mission of AMSU is strong, has adopted to meet the needs of the current students and is educating confident, articulate women imbued with the spirit of Serviam who graduate prepared to meet the challenges they will face in life.” She has also commented that “the degree of alumnae support to the school is extraordinary!” Sister looks forward to meeting many of you at AMSU school and alumnae events!
1959

Josephine Nassisi Masulli - This year was very exciting in many ways for her growing family. One particular highlight didn’t involve family however; it was reuniting with her best friend at the Mount, Dolores Castaldo Corini. They got together after so many years thanks to the efforts of Elaine Castaldo Sackmann (Class of ’61). They met for lunch, took a few pictures and caught up on the past years. “Our promise is to continue the reunion.”

1961

Julia McKeon Murphy and her sister, Mary, visited Ireland in the spring and while visiting Killarney, they met up with Marion Murphy Keane for breakfast.

Mary Jane Coyle Dooley, Marie Chiappe Rhodes, Rose Marie Caiazzo Occhino, and Elaine Castaldo Sackmann have been getting together with their AMSU French teacher, Ms. Com, and her husband, Pierre, at The Culinary Institute of America every spring and fall for the past two years. They’ve had lunch at Bocuse several times and always visit the grave of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin, where they clean up the site and put in new plantings. Pierre, the perennial and quintessential professor, has been instructing them on Teilhard’s writings. It has been an amazing reunion. Mary Jane, Rose Marie, and Elaine wanted to let Ms. Com know how she had affected their lives in the short time she was their French teacher proving that ‘one and a half years last a lifetime’.

Ann Hunt and her husband, Ed, met up with Marie Chiappe Rhodes and Elaine Castaldo Sackmann in May at the annual meeting, luncheon, and lecture of The American Teilhard Association at Union Theological Seminary in NYC; a delightful afternoon of catching up and learning more about Pere Teilhard.

Eileen Molly Mann, who lives with her husband, George, in South Carolina, visited her family in New Jersey in June and went to see Bernadette Gillis. She and Bern had been classmates at St. Philip Neri’s together. On an earlier visit, Eileen brought pictures and memorabilia from their grade school days and their days at AMSU.

Kathy Cleary Price, who lives in Virginia, invited Rose Marie Caiazzo Occhino and Elaine Castaldo Sackmann to visit her and spend some time in DC. The trip was planned for last year but Hurricane Sandy came along and so they had to postpone it till this year. A wonderful four days. A special highlight was the Newseum. Being the 50th anniversary of the death of John F. Kennedy, there were numerous exhibits on Kennedy, his presidency, the assassination, and his family. John F. Kennedy was elected President when Kathy, Rose Marie, and Elaine were seniors at AMSU.

Marion Murphy Keane visited New York in October and surprised Bernadette Gillis with a visit. Marion lives in Ireland but her two daughters live in New York and her brother in Bronxville. Marion and Bernadette attended St. Philip Neri. Marion hopes to return in the spring and get together with more of her classmates at that time.

Carole Kakos, Rose Marie Caiazzo Occhino, Elaine Castaldo Sackmann, and Jane Finnerty attended the Angela Spirituality Retreat at the Ursuline Provincialite in October. While this was Carole’s first retreat there, Rose Marie and Elaine have attended several and all are looking forward to the next one.

Barbara Higgins and Elaine Castaldo Sackmann met at Manhattan College where Barbara works and had lunch together.

Joanne Limberg Pergolis got together for a Christmas
dinner with Dorothy Nichols Cusack, Rose Marie Caiazzo Occhino, Elaine Castaldo Sackmann, and Helen Miller Sorensen (all classmates at St. Frances of Rome) at the Milleridge Inn in Jericho. Eileen Casey was unable to join them at the Milleridge Inn but looks forward to a future get-together, perhaps in Manhattan, a meeting place that additional classmates might find convenient.

The ‘Class of ’61 Loop’ is looking for additional members. At last count there were over 30 classmates in ‘The Loop’. If you are interested in adding your name, please contact Rose Marie – rosemo37@aol.com, Mary Jane – mjdooley@optonline.net, Carole – carolkwithane@aol.com or Elaine – shakaskye@gmail.com.

Carole Kakos – “It was a pleasure to be present at the November 2nd Mass and Kickoff Celebration at AMSU. Attending Mass in the chapel and walking through the school hallways always brings back special memories of my years at Mount. Having the opportunity to dine and chat with former classmates Elaine Castaldo Sackmann, Julia McKeon Murphy, Sr. Jeanne Giebelhouse and Sr. Jane Finnerty was simply delightful and having the opportunity to meet and speak with current students was a highlight. There’s so much going on at AMSU. The students are outstanding and it is obvious most of them will go on to do great things after graduating from Mount. The vibrant and innovative spirit of the Academy will continue to flourish if we ensure Their Future by participating in the campaign.”

Mary Lalor Lalli – She would like to acknowledge how much her twelve years(!) at AMSU helped her. The formation she took for granted in the gift of our religion has helped her throughout the following 52 years. She has had incredible blessings. More and more she thanks God for her wonderful husband. Married in 1967, they lived in South Bend, IN; Scranton PA; Mt. Arlington, NJ; and for the last 37 years Manassas, VA. Their first child was born in South Bend, second - Scranton, third Mt. Arlington and the last three in Manassas. They range in age from almost 45 to just turned 29. They have two daughters and four sons. Their grandchildren ages go from 12 to newborn. In the next few weeks grandchild # 19 will be born! Considering both of them have one sibling, they are learning every day about family. Though it is unusual today, all their children live within a half hour from them. One Sunday a month everyone comes to their house for dinner. It is not quiet, but it is good. Mary would love to hear from anyone from her class, 1961 or living in the D.C. area. She regrets not attending her 50th reunion, especially after going to her husband’s in Philly. Everyone was encouraging her to attend. Having enjoyed his so much Mary realized she should have listened. “Once again, thank you Mount St. Ursula for giving me so much. I did receive a degree in math and prior to marriage worked at IBM as a programmer and later taught algebra to high school students for sixteen years. Though I am emphasizing the spiritual gift given to me by the order of Saint Ursula, I also am grateful for the academics which were superior.”

1965

Susan McCarthy Cronin – Susan welcomed grandchild number 4, Conor Sebastian Cronin last fall. He was born on November 10, 2013, weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 19 inches long. The Cronin Family feels very blessed!!!

Carol Ivory, Ph.D. – Carol received the Manu Daula [Frigate Bird] Award from the Pacific Arts Association, an international organization devoted to the study of all the arts of Oceania. The award is voted on by the PAA membership and given to an individual for outstanding achievement in and dedication to the arts of the Pacific. She is professor of Fine Arts and associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at Washington State University. She is curating an exhibition on the art of the Marquesas Islands set to open at the Musée du quai Branly, Paris, in 2016.
In Memoriam

Margaret Creagh Skelly ’34
Dorothy McCoy Horan ’39
Arthur Donovan
Beloved Brother of
Joan Donovan ’44
Mary Graefenecker Bogert ’44
Patricia Hamill Joyce, Class of 1948
Angela Murray ’49
Emily Patrizzi Consigli ’49
Elizabeth Dooley Corbett ’50
Raymond J. Tensfeldt
Beloved husband of
Maureen Cunningham Tensfeldt ’50
Tecla Candela Cirieco ’52
Micheline Guidice Ferrante ’56
Charles F. O’Donnell
Beloved Husband of
Mary Hehir O’Donnell ’57
Carol Cashman ’64
Mario F. Rolla,
Beloved father of
Adrienne Rolla ’76
Barbara Keane ’77
Beloved Cousin of
Marie Sherry LaTourette ’70,
Patricia Sherry O’Connor ’72 and
Helen Sherry Downey ’74
Maria Criscuolo ’78
Ann Mangan
Beloved Mother of
Margaret Mangan Murtagh ’79,
Maryann Mangan Palermo ’81 and
Eileen Mangan Van Hoek ’84
Mary Elaine Boylan McGurk
Beloved Mother of
Lynn McGurk Rendine ’80 and
Mari McGurk Gray ’81
Herm Udo
Beloved Father of
Maureen Gould Decay ’80 and
Kerri Gould Reynolds ’86
John Vincent O’Toole
Beloved Father of
Siobhan O’Toole Rini ’83 and
Meaghan O’Toole ’89
Geraldine Daniel
Beloved Mother of
Sandra Daniel ’86
Laura Landrum-Walker
Beloved Mother of
Sarita Hatcher ’01

Class Notes

1969

Class of 1969 -
The 2009 MSU reunion provided an opportunity for some members of the Class of 1969 to rekindle old friendships and start a new tradition. Since the reunion, Anne Barrins, Eileen Mulligan McCarthy, Pat Kelleher Marquart, Gail Davey McElligott, and Barbara Boes Bock have gotten together annually in sunny Florida to savor old memories and make new ones. They look forward to seeing the other members of the class of ’69 at their 45th reunion!

1977

Margaret (Pegie) King – She is an Adjunct Professor in Criminal Justice at both Molloy College and Briarcliffe College after receiving her Masters degree in Criminal Justice from Molloy December 2012.

2000

2013 has been a big year for Spiridoula (Sandy) Manessis. Starting in the summer of 2013, she became an Assistant Principal for New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II. She also got married on October 13, 2013 to Danovan Clacken, Jr. She is now Mrs. Manessis-Clacken. Congratulations, Sandy!

2006

Urmilla Guman
– She recently got married to her best friend Rohit Singh on August 2, 2013.

They are still living in their hometown, the Bronx. She is currently a Supply Chain Project Manager at a cosmetics company. Urmilla and her husband wish their MSU family a joyful new year.
Backstage with Vanessa Williams

A delegation of eight women, including Ms. Cathy Corticcio (long-time faculty member at AMSU), Ms. Pat Rooms (retired AMSU teacher) and Ms. Maggie Knoesel (former AMSU vice principal and mother of Margaret Knoesel ’87) attended the matinee performance of Trip To Bountiful on Broadway starring Cicely Tyson and Vanessa Williams. In September, Fr. John arranged for the ladies to meet Ms. Williams in her dressing room after the performance, where this photo was taken. Cathy and Pat are on the far right and Maggie on the far left. If you look closely at Ms. Williams’ dressing room mirror, you can see a photo of Ms. Williams and Zuleimi Torres, our junior who was tragically killed by a car last May on the Grand Concourse. That photo was taken here at the school just before Christmas 2012. Ms. Williams has kept it to inspire her before each performance.

Comedy Central films at AMSU

On Friday, December 13th, a film crew for Comedy Central arrived at the school to film scenes for one of its new shows. The cast and crew numbered roughly 80. One scene was shot in one of the old rooms of the convent. The façade of the convent provided a wonderful backdrop for the shoot. The major scene was filmed in the school’s auditorium which was transformed into a “prom” event. The location manager remembered the school from a previous visit several years ago to shoot scenes from the movie “The Music Never Stopped,” starring JK Simmons. The recent filming took place between 10am and midnight and provided the school with a little extra income.

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 5th at 2pm and posted on the school website – www.amsu.org

Each ticket stub: $25. Total ticket (five stubs): $100.
Academy of Mount St. Ursula
Four Years to Last a Lifetime

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Visit us online@ www.amsu.org

Ensure Their Future
The Campaign for the Academy of Mount St. Ursula

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