



Notre Dame Parish School

Formation in Virtue | Academic Excellence | Service to those in Need

Alumni News *** December 2022



Each year, a Bible verse is selected for reflection by the ministries of Notre Dame Parish and School. This year's theme verse is: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.* Romans 15:13

Thanks to God and the faithful commitment of our community, Notre Dame School is experiencing a renewed sense of joy, peace, and hope. We began the school year with the 65th anniversary celebration for the parish hosted in the school gym. Our gym was transformed for that weekend, resembling a hotel ballroom. The gym will again be decorated for our annual Spring Fest fundraiser on April 22, 2023. We hope to see you there!

We are grateful to the Lord and to all those who have served the mission of Notre Dame School over the past 56 years. At Notre Dame Parish School, we partner with families in the education of the soul, intellect, body, and hearts of our students in a joyful and vibrant community of faith, learning, and service. May the Lord continue to bless Notre Dame Parish School! - Greg Caudle, Principal



On August 12, 1957, a small notice appeared in The Denver Catholic Register that Archbishop Urban Vehr had founded a new parish in southwest Denver: Notre Dame. I am thrilled to announce one of the first elements of building upon the parish's legacy and an incredible anniversary gift of the parish to the parish, namely, the redesign and construction of a new Pietà Plaza. The Pietà grotto space is an important feature in the life and worship of Notre Dame Parish. Now, as we celebrate our 65th anniversary and benefit from the keen stewardship of the parish's pastoral and finance councils and the generosity of many parishioners, we are able to rebuild the plaza and meet the need of the parish for an outdoor gathering space for liturgy, education, celebration, and community. I can't think of a better way to celebrate Notre Dame's 65th anniversary and to commit to the mission entrusted to her for the years that lie ahead than to honor Mary and to honor the parishioners with this renewed gathering space: Pietà Plaza. Congratulations, Notre Dame Parish. Happy anniversary! - Father Edward Buelt, Pastor

Spotlight on Alumni

On June 3, 1982, Notre Dame School made national news. Molly Dieveney, a 6th grader at Notre Dame, was the Scripps National Spelling Bee Champion. Molly has been kind enough to share her memorable experience with us, what got her to the championship, where she went on to school, and her life today.

The Scripps competition began in 1925 and to this day remains the most prestigious Bee held annually. To reach the championship Molly first won at the school level. Next was the Archdiocesan competition in March, then the *Rocky Mountain News* Colorado-Wyoming Bee was in April, followed by the National Bee in Washington D.C. in June. Amazingly, there were four National Spelling Bee Champions from Denver between 1979 and 1989!



When Molly made the decision to compete, she was committing to countless hours of practice, treating it like an athlete preparing for their favorite sporting competition. Dee Taylor was the faculty sponsor of the Spelling Bee, and Molly would practice and study three times a week after school, reviewing lists of words, studying definitions and pronunciations. Molly had support from multiple coaches including her neighbor Florence Bailey, her parents, siblings, and her aunt and uncle, Kathy and Frank Dieveney. Florence's son, Jacques, won the national championship in 1980.

When the Bee started, Molly found being on stage and spelling live challenging. In the end, she persevered against her opponent who misspelled "contretemps." Molly spelled it correctly along with the final word "psoriasis" for the win. She remembers the excitement of winning and the thrill of appearing on *The Today Show* with Jane Pauley and Bryant Gumbel the next morning. Her prizes for winning were: \$1,000, a 19" Zenith color television, and a set of *Great Books of the Western World*. (The top prize in 2022 was \$50,000.)



When asked if there was a lifelong lesson in winning the prestigious honor, she responded, "Hard Work! I remember a few times wanting to skip studying and do something fun, but my mother made it very clear that I had committed to this, and other people had given me (A LOT) of their time to help."

Molly has several treasured memories of her time at Notre Dame including the very good friends she made, Mrs. Alfred's social studies class in fifth grade, and the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) days when each student picked a free book.

After Notre Dame, Molly attended St. Mary's Academy. She went to Yale University where she majored in East Asian Studies and Chinese language. She spent summers throughout college working as a reporter at *The Rocky Mountain News*. After college graduation she became a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* in New York, where she continues to write freelance features. She moved to a suburb of Philadelphia 25 years ago with her husband and she has three boys ages 25, 23 and 21. The boys never showed any interest in pursuing the Spelling Bee competition.

When asked if she had any words of wisdom for our Notre Dame students, Molly advised them to always do their best in school and to be honest with themselves. They may not be strong in every subject, but they need to give each one their all.

Molly loves seeing the names and pictures of her friends from Notre Dame pop-up on her social media feed, it always makes her smile. We would love to share more stories from our Notre Dame alumni and help to make those connections, go to <https://www.notredamedenver.org/alumni>.



Congratulations to Class of 2022 High School Graduates

We celebrate the accomplishments of the high school seniors who graduated from Notre Dame in 2018. We wish them God's love in their hopes and dreams for the future. Updates are provided for those alumni students or parents who responded by publication date.

Elizabeth Bui – Graduated from Lakewood High School with an international baccalaureate diploma. She is currently attending CU Denver with a public health major in mind.

Jessica Cabral – Graduated from Mullen High School. She was the vice president of the multicultural club at Mullen as well as one of the creators of the Mullen 2021-2022 yearbook. She is currently attending college at Grand Canyon University and is studying Exercise Science with an emphasis in sports performance.

Thomas Carmen – Graduated from Mullen High School. In high school, Thomas lettered twice in varsity football and was awarded an academic all-state award. He participated in speech and debate, mock trial, and Future Business Leaders of America. He also traveled to the International Model United Nations conference in Washington DC. Thomas has been a lector at Notre Dame since 2017 and enjoys reading at Mass when he is home from college. Currently, Thomas is attending Creighton University where he received the Founders Award Scholarship. He is studying Business Management while on the Pre-law track.

Ruby Cecenas – Graduated from Mullen High School where she received a seal of biliteracy on her diploma. This seal states that Ruby had a high GPA in both English and Spanish language classes. She received many subject awards at Mullen, including Spanish Honors, Trigonometry, Biology and Health awards. She was a cheerleader at Mullen and the four years of cheer provided her opportunities to travel and compete at a national level. Currently, Ruby is attending CU Boulder where she is majoring in Psychology.

Alicia Chavez – Graduated from Littleton High School in the top 10 percent of her class with an International Baccalaureate diploma. She was incredibly involved in theater and music during high school, and had the lead role her senior year, in the play Into the Woods. The show was nominated for a Bobby G award which allowed her the opportunity to perform at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. During COVID she started a business making masks which she sold, as well as donated, to groups of people. Alicia lettered all four years in both academics and in choir. She received the Math Department award, the Performing Arts Department award, the seal of Biliteracy on her diploma and the Hall of Fame Award. She currently is attending Colorado College on a merit scholarship. She also received two other scholarships from Intact Specialty and Light of the World Parish. Alicia is majoring in Political Science and minoring in Music.

Naomi Fanchi – Graduated from Lakewood High School where she played varsity volleyball all four years and where she excelled academically. She is currently attending CU Boulder on a merit scholarship and is studying EBIO which promotes and supports scholarly achievement and trains students for a variety of professional careers so that graduates are well-positioned to pursue a wide range of opportunities and career options, including, but not limited to, research, internships, professional school (graduate, medical, dental etc.)

Dominick Flores – Graduated from Mullen High School where he enjoyed playing sports and pursuing academics. He is currently attending Benedictine University where he is playing lacrosse.

Alexia Gallegos – Graduated from Lakewood High School in May 2022. She enlisted in the U.S. Navy in April 2022 and went off to boot camp in June 2022. She is officially a U.S. Navy Sailor. Alexia is stationed in California for her base command but is excited to travel with her deployments. Thank you for your service, Alexia. We are proud of you!

Reid Hahn – Graduated from Littleton High School and is attending Arapahoe Community College, with an undeclared major. He is assessing the waters by taking prerequisite courses to see where his career interest lands. After he obtains his associates degree, his plan is to transfer to an in-state school to obtain his bachelor's degree.

Sydney Hahn – Graduated with honors from Mullen High School. She is now studying English and Biology, with a pre-vet concentration at the University of Mary. Sydney received an academic scholarship, and a scholarship for being selected to be in the college honors program.

Diego Jerez – Graduated from Mullen High School. He loves the fact that he is still best friends, and hangs out every day, with many of his Notre Dame friends. He is currently attending the University of Colorado.

Marie Carmen LaRosa – Graduated from Bishop Machebeuf High School where she received an award for having a 4.1 GPA. She also received outstanding academic achievement awards in precalculus and in art. In addition, Marie won first place in the Catholic Schools art show for a painting and best in her school for her illuminated manuscript. Currently, Marie is taking a gap year and interning with her sister as she learns the ins and outs of graphic design. In January, the two sisters will be moving to Scotland for six months to work on a website and to investigate graphic design schools there.

Karla Osorio-Pedroza – Graduated from Arrupe Jesuit High School in May. Currently she is attending Red Rocks Community College for her general study classes. Her goal is to then transfer to Colorado School of Mines to complete her degree.

Celia Rael – Graduated with honors from Mullen High School. She enjoyed being on the tennis team all four years. Currently Celia is attending Oklahoma University where she is pursuing a degree in dentistry.

Lita Rael – Graduated with honors from Mullen High School. She played on Mullen's tennis team all four years. Currently, Lita is attending CU Boulder and majoring in integrated physiology on the pre-med track.

Ricky Ruiz – Graduated from Mullen High School where he received the Engineering CP award for 2022. He received scholarships to MSU, DU and UOD where he was planning to major in electrical engineering. Instead, he decided to take a gap year to travel and focus on himself. Ricky was recently offered a job with the Federal Government to continue his career path in the electrical field. He is now working as an apprentice electrician.

Kiersten Super-Hill – Graduated from Mullen High School. In high school she was a member of the National Honor Society and the National Association of High School Scholars. She received the Mullen Torch Award and the National Scholastic Leadership Award. Currently, Keri is attending Iowa State University on a five-year Academic Scholarship. Her major is Architecture. Her dream is to specialize in building homes that utilize materials and designs to reduce energy for heating and cooling.

Anthony Trujillo – Graduated from Mullen High School in May and has entered the workforce.

Development News: 13th Annual Fund

The Annual Fund is vital to continuing our mission to: Touch Hearts and Teach Minds – to form students as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our goal this year is \$125,000. We are grateful to our many donors and benefactors. Last year over \$100,000 was donated to the school through this effort. Please consider donating to the Annual Fund. To donate, go to <https://bit.ly/give2ND> and select "School Development" or mail checks to:

Notre Dame School, 2165 S. Zenobia St., Denver, CO 80219

Write 'Annual Fund' in the check memo line.

Notre Dame Catholic School Service Projects

In following our mission of "Service to Those in Need", Notre Dame School plans service projects to assist those in our area who need a little extra help. One of these projects is our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive. The kids bring in non-perishable food so that families who might be struggling can have a nice Thanksgiving dinner. The food is brought to the St. Anthony of Padua food bank. Last year we collected almost 25 boxes filled with food.

Another service project is our diaper drive for Bottoms Up Diaper Bank. Diapers are an expensive, necessary item for babies. Did you know that 1 in 3 single mothers struggle to provide diapers to keep their babies clean? Notre Dame families donate many sizes of diapers and other items to help care for our littlest ones in need.

Last Easter we helped the residents at Mullen Home with our Easter bags filled with snacks, toiletries, and socks that the students brought in. An Easter card handmade by the children containing loving prayers was included in each bag. We believe the bags helped to show Christ's love and brighten the season for the elderly who are being cared for at Mullen Home.



Notre Dame Specials Hall Redesign

Big changes have arrived for ND students, Specials teachers and their classrooms. A shift in spaces within the parish last year became a blessing when members of the Specials team, Erika Matteo (Library and Media), John Mendez (Music and Choir), and Jen Lieb (Art), put their heads together and built out a dream space for their classes. After months of planning, preparing, and packing they welcomed students to the brand new Specials Hall at the start of this school year and they are loving it.

Prior to the redesign, the Specials classes were spread out across the school building and now they are all consolidated together on the lower floor under the gym. This centralized configuration is intended to allow for the Specials staff to more easily collaborate and share resources.

In addition to a more collaborative space for staff, the students get a more differentiated space that better fits their needs. For instance, during Media and Library, elementary and middle school students have separate library areas to better meet their needs. The increased space also allows for additional equipment to help students get the most from their time at school.

With better collaborative spaces for staff and students and added space for more equipment, this change is set to help ND students excel for years to come.



**NOTRE DAME SCHOOL
ALUMNI WEBSITE:**

<https://www.notredamedenver.org/alumni>

Support Notre Dame When You Shop at Amazon:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/80-0016788>

**NOTRE DAME SCHOOL
SPRING FEST FUNDRAISER:
April 22, 2023 in School Gym**

«Names»
«Address 1» «Address 2»
«City», «State» «ZIP»

Return Service Requested

Notre Dame Parish School
2165 South Zenobia Street
Denver CO 80219-5058

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GOLDEN CO
PERMIT NO. 104