

The background is a mosaic of small, irregular tiles in various shades of gray, black, white, green, and blue. In the lower-left corner, there is a 3D-rendered black graduation cap with a gold tassel and a vibrant yellow and orange sunflower with a dark brown center. The sunflower is on a green stem with leaves. A black rectangular sign with white text is positioned in the center-right area.

St. Martin de Porres  
Catholic School

# Budding Scholars

Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2013-2014



*Greetings to the families, friends, and supporters of St. Martin de Porres School!*

**IT IS WITH GREAT JOY AND PRIDE THAT WE PRESENT TO YOU OUR ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2013-2014 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR.**

As we began our academic year of 2014-2015, we were amazed and humbled at all that has been accomplished here at the school. We have gained so many friends and have come so far. And as a result, have been able to prepare our students for a bright and rewarding future. This could never have happened without the support of so many.

During the past year, we continued on our road as an independent Catholic school. Not only has our enrollment grown to 480 students, we have a waiting list of eager parents and students who want to become part of the St. Martin de Porres School family. You have done so much to help this become a reality.

With your kind support we have been able to expand our many programs. We've added two full time Pre-K classrooms of three and four year olds, updated our computer lab with thirty new computers, and continue to develop our Extended Day program which adds an extra six hours of schooling per week for all 480 students. These programs keep our students focused and more importantly off the streets that have claimed so many young lives.

Our priority is the education and future of our students. Even though we teach Pre-K through 8th grade, our objective is to make sure that all of our students are prepared and ready for college. The teachers and staff here work hard to teach our students to aim high, to have good study habits, to take responsibility, and to take pride in accomplishing their goals through their hard work. We want to make sure that they have what they need to make it all the way through college and beyond. We presently have partnerships with St. Joseph's University, Temple University and Drexel University. Our upcoming graduates are now applying and being accepted to some of the areas Prep Schools and Academies. Their great education starts here.

Though we've had many challenges here at the school, they are shadowed by our many triumphs. These triumphs are possible because all of our supporters. Whether through prayer or donations, you have made it possible for us to stand strong in North Philadelphia. To be at St. Martin de Porres is to be at a school which can dream new things and know that you are there to make it possible.

We hope you will have an opportunity to come and visit to see for yourself who we are here at SMdPS.

Thank you for journeying with us, for supporting us, but most importantly for believing in us.

With sincere gratitude,

*Sr. Nancy Fitzgerald, S.S.J.*

Sr. Nancy Fitzgerald, SSJ  
Principal



Jack Donnelly, Chairman  
Board of Directors

# The seeds you've Planted are Budding!

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN

We were thrilled to open our first pre-kindergarten classes in the fall. Two classes – fifteen three-year-olds and fifteen four-year-olds – began the year filled with energy and an eagerness to learn. Enrollment filled quickly, including a wait list, confirming a deep desire for good early education in our neighborhood. New teacher Laura Checchia (three-year-olds) and 8 year veteran SMDP kindergarten teacher Dara Easterling (four-year-olds) formed a strong, collaborative team, each with a classroom aide. Most of the children started out lacking in basic skills for preschool, however by the end of the year we saw marked progress. Children without fine motor skills or the ability to write their name were completing these and numerous other tasks. And their growth in maturity was evident as they followed instructions, showed kindness and respect to their classmates and developed the ability to problem-solve in social settings on their own, without teacher intervention. In all, it was a tremendous learning year – for our staff and the students – sowing seeds of character growth and achievement set to blossom in the coming years.



## SPONSOR A STUDENT



It has been exciting to see the Sponsor-A-Student program take root and grow over the past 2 ½ years. Beginning in the winter of 2012, the program has nearly tripled in size, with a sizable impact on both children and sponsors alike. Sponsor Kathy Friel has watched her two students grow and mature while she's known them. "Kalise was extremely shy when I first met her . . . Linda is a firecracker!" Kathy said. "They are both delightful young women."

For Kathy, sponsorship brought an added benefit to her giving. "Sponsorship gives you the rare opportunity of directly observing the benefits of your contribution," she continued. Many like Kathy are attracted to these 'intangible benefits': seeing the delight in a child's face as they greet you at a luncheon, talking with them and listening to them read, playing a game or receiving one of their hand-made cards. The rewards far outweigh the gift, sponsors say year after year. And this year we added bi-annual progress reports, enabling you to see in greater detail where your student has improved.

Tuition covers only a fraction of the costs of educating a child at Sr. Martin de Porres School. Your sponsorship pledge bridges the gap, meaning that your sponsored child stays in an environment that is values-based, achievement-oriented and life changing. Become a student sponsor today and watch your investment in a child's life bear beautiful fruit!

Leslie Binns	Kathy Friel	Pam Mahoney	Joe Schanberger	Kelly & Betty Walker
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Program Highlights		
	Students	Sponsors
2011-12	22	14
2012-13	47	35
2013-14	63	49

# Thank You for Helping Our School

## LANGUAGE ARTS

**Our students continue to show great promise in our reading and language programs.**

Advanced Reading students – the top third of our middle-schoolers – are building literary interpretation and analysis skills that exceed what is needed to enter high school. Former 5th grade teacher Sr. Mary Walsh's new 6th-7th grade reading groups widened our remedial "safety net", to help our students all rise toward grade level proficiency, from K-7th grades. Merging technology, visual and oral approaches she's getting even avoidant learners onto a path of growth.

**Graduate: Anthony Abron, Jr. SMdP Class of 2010**

Anthony Abron, Jr. graduated from SMdP in 2010 and became our first graduate to attend the prestigious Malvern Preparatory School. While at Malvern, Anthony flourished, participating in a wide range of activities including the Speech and Debate Club, All Catholic Chorus and musical West Side Story while also holding leadership positions as Editor of the school newspaper and President of the Diversity Club. Anthony traveled to Armenia during his senior year and managed to earn honor roll nearly every academic quarter while at Malvern. In February, Anthony was selected Mainline Student of the Week out of hundreds of public and private school students throughout the mainline. High School: Malvern Preparatory School College: George Washington University Career Aspirations: Congressional Speech Writer Opera Singer

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**Technology instruction took a giant leap forward with the replacement of our 12-year-old computer lab equipment.** The speed and capabilities of the new Dell computers boosted instructional time and expanded learning experiences with engaging new programs, thanks to generous grants from The Charter Foundation and Union Benevolent Association. Hands-on experiments led the innovations in science this year, with experiments ranging from exploring the properties of matter to charting the water cycle and growing bubbles out of polymers. The students are more excited than ever to have a new science center, projected for the fall of 2015.

**Graduate: Mailisa Crews, class of 2008**

As a 7th grader, Mailisa was bright but doing mediocre school work. Seeing her potential, her teacher, Miss Coleman, gave her a challenge: "Why do mediocre work, if you are not mediocre? Don't you know that what you do now affects who you will be in life?" That was a turning point for Mailisa. She became an honors student and later earned a prestigious scholarship to Mercy Vocational High School. Graduating third in her class, Mailisa was accepted to every college where she applied. She is now a sophomore at Temple University majoring in Information Technology and Digital Media. "My education at SMdP prepared me for the real world in many ways . . . they expected more of me than I did of myself. SMdP pushed me to be my best self." High School: Mercy Vocational High School, 2012 College: Temple University Career aspiration: Director of IT for a major hospital



## MATH

**Math programs expanded this year, taking our students farther than they've been before.**

Advanced Math students – the top third of our 5th-8th graders – are inventing math games, combining high-level logic and advanced math concepts with a healthy dose of competition and fun. The new IXL and ALEKS online math curricula brought math instruction to the individual level, tailored to challenge and support students where they need it most. Baseball fanatics flocked to the Math Club to play Fantasy Baseball, building essential math skills while engaging the fun facts and trivia of baseball.

**Graduate: Ashley Fuller, class of 2006**

As a student at SMdP, Ashley Fuller never would have imagined a career in accounting. Though she was talented in math, Ashley was painfully shy. Seeing her potential, Ashley's teachers "raised the bar" so she would perform to her best. It was no surprise that by the time Ashley tried accounting in high school, she had the highest grades in her class. In college, it became her passion. And Ashley overcame her shyness to become a two time recipient of the Rosemont College Leadership Award and President of the Rosemont Activities Council. "St. Martin de Porres provided me with the education and skills I needed to become a great student, teammate, employee, and leader for the future," she said. High School: Cardinal Dougherty High School, 2010 College: Rosemont College Career aspiration: Certified Public Accountant





# Scholars Grow In So Many Ways

## CLASS MENTORS

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” Over the last two years we’ve seen student answers change from basketball stars and hair stylists to neurosurgeons and CPAS, largely due to the influence of our Class Mentors.

During three meaningful visits a year, this group of businessmen and women have shared their stories and brought in real-life lessons to challenge our students to consider life choices and career paths they may never have thought possible. “Why just take any job at a hotel?” asked Fox School of Business’ Managing Director of Business Development Greg Deshields to a classroom of 4th graders. “Why not become the owner?” The hospitality industry leader then led the students through hotel design and marketing exercises.

Students also saw their horizons widen through a mini “Shark Tank” competition led by entrepreneur Vlad Bien-Aime, CEO of Global DMS, a medical career Q & A with Temple University Hospital Chief Surgeon, Dr. Selwyn Rogers and personal vision, leadership and growth challenges by Verizon’s Regional President for Pennsylvania and Delaware, Tim Smith.

Thank you, mentors, for the profound influence you’re having on students’ lives. Find out how you can become a Class Mentor by contacting our Development Office today!

- **Vlad Bien-Aime - Greg Deshields - Lisa Dickson - Dr. Amanda Hargrove - Cassandra Hayes -**
- **Paul Lancaster Adams - Andrew Pogue -Dr. Selwyn Rogers - Tim Smith - Dr. Naja Waters**



## ROTARY BEACON

We’re proud to have pioneered the region’s first student-to-Rotarian “pen pal” program with the Philadelphia Rotary Club. The “Rotary Beacon” program, run through our development office and led by Rotarian Frank Fazio, has involved 13 Rotarians and 22 students over the past two years in a wonderful exchange of life questions, career stories and worldly wisdom. While our students are learning and sharpening their communication skills, the Rotarians have experienced the blessing of seeing students broaden their life choices, determined to go after big dreams. Congratulations to graduating 8th graders Chenaanah Bell and Samuel Weeks, recipients of \$500 Rotary Beacon Scholarships from the Philadelphia Rotary Club!

Rotarian participants: David Gill, Frank Hoffman, Lisa Leonard, Jeb Brookman, Scott Grande, Bob Brookman, Biola Aderinto,, Jason Mango, Sandy Goldberg, Jay Pennie, Rich Slinkard, Rich, Steve Dalia, Victoria Yancey



This year's Budding Scholars Gala at the Hilton Philadelphia City Ave was our best ever. Students and alumni welcomed nearly 300 guests and sponsors, engaging them with interactive displays of how SMdP was preparing them for the "real world." It was thrilling to hear the achievements of graduate Anthony Abron, Jr. and enjoy a few moments of lively dancing with our student performers and guests after a delicious dinner and stirring live auction. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our donors and sponsors who brought in over \$280,000 in net proceeds, more than the last two galas combined!

Recipient of the 2014 St. Martin de Porres Award, President and CEO of Brandywine Realty Trust Jerry Sweeney, recapped what he experienced with these words: "You can see on the faces of the students that they have a vision for where they want to go . . . and as you listen to them you can feel their determination that one day, they will make it happen. And that's really what education is all about."



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# Annual Gala



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### **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Thomas Deegan, Jr. Memorial Scholarship  
The Children of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas  
Deegan, Sr.

### **UNITED WAY**

John Butler  
Stephen & Susan Costalas  
Maria Hand  
Richard Slavin  
Monique Wright

# **PARTNERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

## **PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTE OF CPAs**

What began as a few financial literacy lessons with ParenteBeard Partner Julius Green and CPA LaChantee Webb has blossomed into a full program for our 7th grade Advanced Math Class. Run by the Pennsylvania Institute of CPAs (PICPA) through the leadership of Maureen Renzi, VP- Communications, the program walks students through real life personal finance, business planning and career opportunities in finance. Principal Sr. Nancy Fitzgerald sees great purpose in the PICPA's involvement with our students. "By bringing in a professional and showing [the students] exactly how finance and literacy are so important in a career choice, it really captures their attention and they see the real purpose behind what they're learning." The program also captured the heart of the Chair of the PICPA's Diversity Committee, Darrell Giles, who is a partner at the public accounting firm Mitchell & Titus LLP and a contributor to the program. "Our firm and other accounting firms should really consider this as a part of their community effort." In a professional field where minorities are underrepresented, we're excited to see students inspired to pursue careers in finance at an early age.

## **ATTORNEY MICHAEL COARD & KAPPA ALPHA PSI FRATERNITY**

"I was born in North Philly to a single mother, poor, with family members on drugs or in jail," said attorney Michael Coard as he addressed our students on the first day of school this fall. "I thought to myself, I'm not really going to amount to anything." Coard, a leading Philadelphia criminal defense attorney whose professional career includes hosting WURD's Radio Courtroom, writing for the Philly post and teaching at Temple University, deeply inspired our students with his courageous life choices. Three students later joined him on a WURD broadcast in December followed by his return to the school in March with members of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity for a mentoring luncheon with our 7th & 8th grade boys. Michael's fraternity brothers mirrored his determination to challenge the students as they shared their uniquely inspiring stories. "Success in life is about using all the education you have available," Coard concluded. "The world is yours. You have to decide how much you want." We're excited to have these spirited men involved in our students' lives for years to come.



# FINANCIALS

## INDEPENDENCE MISSION SCHOOL

St. Martin de Porres School is proud to be part of the newly formed Independence Mission Schools (IMS). Based on SMDP's independent Catholic school model, IMS formed a network of 15 Catholic elementary schools across the city of Philadelphia in 2013, providing a total of 4,100 children with a high quality, low-cost education. We're excited to be on the cutting edge of their visionary plan to positively impact the entire Philadelphia community.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Join our Sponsor-A-Student program.** Your sponsorship will cover a significant portion of the costs of a year's tuition for one child. You can make a one-time payment of your sponsorship pledge, make monthly pledge payments or share a sponsorship with your friends or family.
- **Enroll your company in OSTC or EITC.** Participating companies may qualify for dollar-for-dollar tax credits of 90% or more, applicable against their quarterly or annual tax filings.
- **Donate to our Annual Fund.**
- **Make a planned gift** of cash or securities.
- **Use our Donor Choice #49530** when you make your **United Way** pledge.
- **Use your employer's matching gift program** to increase your donation.
- **Support our special events** by sponsoring, attending, donating items to our live and silent auctions, or contributing in-kind support for printing and other costs.
- **Use your RedCard** at Target stores – school #14638.
- **Make an in-kind gift** to support our curricula or operations.

You, your family and your business can make a sustainable difference in children's lives and in the future of the greater Philadelphia region. Call the Development office at 215-223-1162 or email at [fsmdps@gmail.com](mailto:fsmdps@gmail.com) to learn the details of any of these donation opportunities. And please be sure to visit our website at [www.smdpschool.org](http://www.smdpschool.org).

# LOOK HOW OUR SCHOLARS HAVE GROWN



## Rita Newton

Management Trainee  
Sofitel Philadelphia  
-Luxury Hotel  
SMdP 2005

Cardinal Dougherty High School  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

St. Martin de Porres gave me the confidence to be myself. I loved going to school because I excelled in the classroom. This quest for knowledge wasn't always shared by my classmates but I didn't let it stop me. I was always encouraged by my teachers to continue on this path. Life isn't about following the crowd. From an early age St. Martin de Porres taught me that and has helped shape what my goals and aspirations are today.



## LaNier Lewis

Social Worker  
Project HOME  
SMdP: 2003

West Philadelphia Catholic High School  
West Chester University of PA  
Temple University (currently a grad student)

SMdP taught me the importance of working independently and the importance of working to my best ability in any situation.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Andrews  
James Broussard  
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Pastor

Sister Nancy Fitzgerald, SSJ  
Principal

Sister Meaghan Patterson  
Vice Principal

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For more information, call the Development office at 215-223-1162 or [fsmdps@gmail.com](mailto:fsmdps@gmail.com)