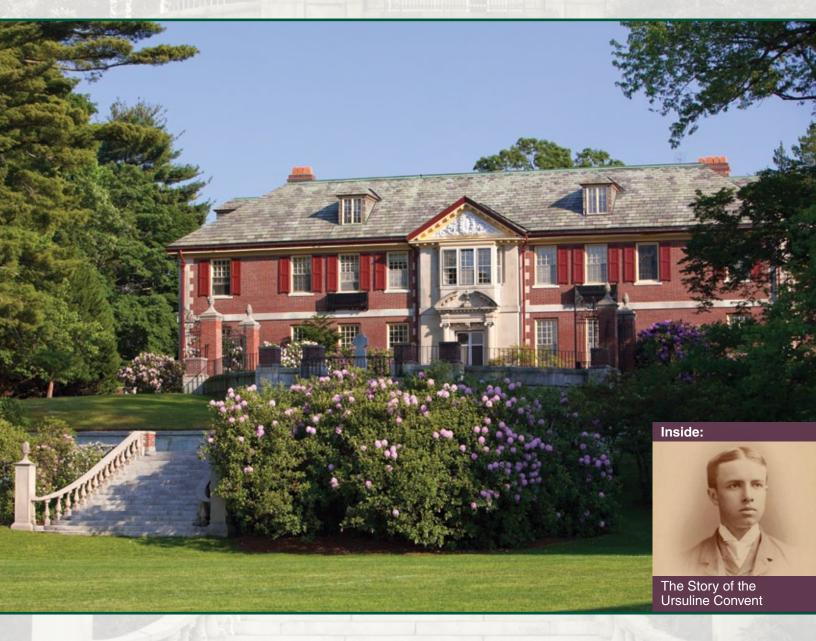
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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends of Ursuline,

It is my pleasure to introduce the latest issue of *Serviam Magazine*. It is a wonderful medley of the old and the new, the traditional and the contemporary. On the cover, you see the iconic convent building in the height of spring. Graduates of the Dedham campus know and love this view, but many are not aware of the fascinating history behind the building and its occupants prior to the Ursuline Sisters. This issue's cover story reveals that history, a story that I know you will enjoy. Inside the magazine, you will read about the accomplishments of our alumnae and current students, stories that make me proud to serve as the President of this school.

It has been a year of milestones and firsts at Ursuline Academy. I began the summer by attending the first UES (Ursuline Educational Services) Global Conference, held in New Rochelle, New York. It was an honor to be part of the planning effort for this conference, and energizing to be with Ursuline educators from over twenty countries around the world, sharing successes and challenges. The experience affirmed that the mission of St. Angela Merici is alive and well!

Back home in Dedham, the Academy was affected by a milestone of another sort. In August, the Ursuline Order began the process of merging its Central and Northeast

Provinces, a step that had been contemplated for quite some time. As a result of this decision, the Ursuline Sisters living in the convent relocated to other homes, and the convent building came under the ownership of the school. We are now in the process of determining how this gracious, historic building might best benefit future generations of students.

Much of this year has been focused on the process of renewing the Academy's NEASC accreditation, a process that occurs once every ten years. It began with a rigorous self-study involving all of the school's many constituents, and culminated in April with a site visit from the NEASC visiting committee. Their recommendations will provide us with a roadmap for continuous improvement of our already strong offering.

Lastly, we end the 2014-15 school year by saying goodbye and best wishes to our first lay principal, Mary Jo Gorman Keaney '82. She recently made the decision to step down from her position as principal in order to care for her parents at their home in Florida. I will post updates on the search for a new principal on our website (UrsulineAcademy.net). We thank Mrs. Keaney for her many years of service, and wish her the best. She is a living model of *Serviam*.

I hope to see you at our second annual Homecoming on Saturday, September 26.

Sincerely,

Rosann M. Whiting President

Rosann Mhiting



Serviam Magazine Spring 2015

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INSIDE



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In an effort to be as environmentally friendly as possible, we mail one copy of *Serviam Magazine* per household. If you prefer to have a separate copy for each alumna in your home, please email development@ursulineacademy.net.

Cover: Ursuline Convent, Inset: Francis Skinner, Jr. c. 1885



INTRODUCTION

Long the object of wonder and affection for generations of Ursuline students who were educated on the Dedham campus, the Ursuline Convent has sedately looked out over the school's grounds since the building was purchased in 1957. Home to the Ursuline Sisters for close to six decades, the building naturally holds an important place in the hearts and minds of Ursuline alumnae. It sits high up on the hill, as though watching over the school building and the students playing on the field, serving as the backdrop for one of the most cherished Ursuline traditions, the graduation procession down the stairs with each young woman holding her bouquet of roses. Some students recall visiting the convent to attend prayer services or spiritual retreats; others attended kindergarten there, or homeroom when the school first moved from Arlington Street; still others have enjoyed reuniting with classmates at Reunions in recent years.

Yet the majestic house known lovingly as "the convent" has a story all its own – a story that predates its purchase by the Ursuline Sisters by yet another fifty years. It is a story woven with threads from the roaring twenties and the suffragette movement,

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Much of the information for this article came firsthand from Sally Seufert Holmes, who grew up around the corner from Ursuline Academy on Highland Street and attended Ursuline for kindergarten as well as 7th and 8th grade. She spent much time on the convent property as a young girl, accompanying her grandfather Arthur Brennan who was chauffeur to the Skinner-Shea family.

Some of the information reported here has been validated with historical records, while other information was received firsthand from Sally's mother Ruth Seufert.

complete with yacht races, seasonal trips abroad, and a lifestyle reminiscent of the landed gentry. It is rich with detail of prominent Boston personalities such as Isabella Stewart Gardner, as well as lesser-known but equally important people like Arthur Brennan, who served as chauffeur and de facto caretaker of the property for almost fifty years.

This is the story of the building that became the Ursuline Convent.



Francis Skinner, Jr., upon his graduation from prep school



Hermann Dudley Murphy portrait study of Mrs. Sarah Skinner, 1905 Courtesy of Dedham Historical Society

FRANCIS SKINNER, JR.

In 1893, the large red farmhouse known locally as "Federal Hill Farm" on Highland Street in Dedham became home to twenty-four year old Francis Skinner, Jr. The son of two prominent families, including some of the most well-known names in Massachusetts history (the Gardners, Peabodys and Lowells on his mother's side), he called himself a "gentleman farmer." He was close friends with his aunt Isabella Stewart Gardner, a Boston socialite most remembered for her Venetian palace and art collection in Boston's Fenway district that eventually became the Gardner Museum.

The Boston *Daily Globe* reported in September 1893 that "Mr. Francis Skinner Jr. entertained a party of friends at dinner Wednesday night at the country club," and that "Mr. Skinner is engaged at present in remodeling and adding to his farm house at Dedham." These and other newspaper clippings mentioning Skinner reveal a sumptuous lifestyle: he traveled in the highest social circles of turn-of-the-century Boston, belonged to several country and social clubs, loved traveling abroad, and perhaps most of all, loved sailing.

"A sensation in Boston's highest society circles has been caused by the recent marriage of Mrs. John L. Gardner's nephew, Francis Skinner, Jr., a youth of large fortune and with a prospect of inheriting millions more in the future. His bride was Miss Sarah E. Carr, a daughter of Patrick Carr, an humble tailor ...

~ Boston Journal, July 21, 1900

In 1899, Francis purchased his first yacht, the *Constellation*; in it, he would compete in yacht races and frequently win. In the same year, Francis spied Sarah Estes Carr, five years his junior, when she was working as a "cloak model" at L.P. Hollander in Boston. Though Brennan-Seufert family oral history claims that Mr. Skinner spotted Sarah while she was modeling, some newspaper reports say they met in Marblehead. Regardless of how they met, their courtship and marriage caused a media frenzy due to Sarah's humble circumstances. It was highly unusual for a society gentleman, whose marriage license listed his occupation as "sea captain," to marry the daughter of a tailor. Their marriage in 1900 was small and quiet. News articles report that Mr. Skinner's family was slow to accept Sarah, but Francis' aunt Isabella took Sarah under her wing. Media reports concur that Mrs. Jack Gardner was accepting of Sarah, dismissing the gossip of the society women. In her book *Mrs. Jack*, author Louise Hall Tharp claims that Francis' mother never would have accepted Sarah into her social circles, but that "Mrs. Jack" Gardner hosted parties to honor the bride as a sort of "private revenge."



Constellation



Arthur Brennan c.1911



Francis Skinner's first car

Francis' mother Eliza Gardner Skinner had died in 1898, but Francis did not inherit the family fortune until the death of his father, Francis Skinner, Sr. in 1905. Apparently, it was this inheritance that allowed him to begin construction of the mansion. In 1906–07, Francis demolished the red farmhouse, and hired noted architect Guy Lowell to design an English country manor-style home. (Guy Lowell is best known as the architect of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.) Word of mouth holds that Francis built the mansion as a wedding gift for his bride – albeit a belated gift, since they had been married for seven years by the time it was completed. To this day, Ursuline students giving tours of the mansion point out the resemblance of the detail around the grand foyer's ceiling to a wedding cake.

The mansion was built at an estimated cost of \$500,000-\$600,000, equivalent to over \$13 million today. The original mansion held twenty rooms and three stories. The first floor was the most impressive, consisting of a reception hall with vaulted ceiling and inlaid marble floor, a large living room, a paneled library, a garden room with Italian terracotta tiled floor, a formal dining room, a breakfast room, and an extensive servants' wing complete with kitchens, storage, and an elaborate series of china closets and butlers' pantries. In keeping with his lifestyle, Mr. Skinner used the finest materials and workmanship, including carved limestone, marble, Italian and Dutch Delft tile, quartered oak, carved mahogany, and other tropical woods. A third of the original house's roof was an outside roof garden with sweeping views of the countryside. The remainder of the house was protected by a multi-colored slate roof. The breathtaking detail of the original home remains to this day – a walking tour of the first floor reveals elaborate egg and dart molding, carved mahogany wall décor, a massive pink Dedham granite mantel, coffered ceilings, plaster rosettes, and ionic columns.

Outside, Skinner surrounded the mansion with extensive landscaped gardens, greenhouses, terraces, orchards, and an indoor swimming pool on the site of the current maintenance shed. Many of the outdoor features were removed when the school was constructed in the late 1950s, but some of the trees and plantings remain to this day. The house had two garages, one referred to as the Carriage House and located near the rear of the mansion, and another located at the far end of the school, where there was also an ice house. It is said that ice was harvested from the spring-fed pond on the property and dragged by horses for storage in the ice house and used year-round.

TIMELINE

1893

1900

1906-07

1908

1914

Eliza Skinner purchases a large red farmhouse on Highland Street from Albert Fisher. It becomes home to Francis Skinner, Jr. Francis Skinner and Sarah Carr marry and make their home in the Dedham house. Francis demolishes the farmhouse and constructs the mansion at 65 Lowder Street. Francis Skinner purchases his first automobile and hires Arthur Brennan to be his driver. Francis Skinner dies at sea aboard the *Caronia*.







The convent chapel, formerly the library

LIFE AT FEDERAL HILL FARM

Francis and Sarah had no children, but theirs was a very busy household nonetheless. A twenty-room mansion on an estate needs servants, and a car aficionado needs a driver. Francis Skinner was an avid sailor and loved cars, but either had no desire or no need to learn how to drive. In 1908, he visited an auto dealership in Cambridge, Mass. and purchased a Pierce Arrow from a 21-year old salesman named Arthur Brennan. Since he did not drive, Francis purchased the car on the condition that Mr. Brennan would join his household staff as his personal chauffeur. Arthur did not know it at the time, but this was the beginning of a relationship that was to last for 49 years.

Arthur Brennan settled on Highland Street, just around the corner from the Skinner mansion, and raised his family there. His duties were many and varied, but were focused on driving in the early years of his employment. At times he would be on call in between trips, sleeping overnight in an apartment on the second floor of the Carriage House. His driving duties also took him well beyond Dedham, as Francis and Sarah traveled annually to New York with trunks of clothes to board a steamship bound for Europe, where they would spend the fall, returning to Dedham for Christmas and the spring season.

In addition to the chauffeur, the Skinner household employed many other servants, including a steward, a second man, a lady's maid, a valet, a coachman, a chambermaid, a head gardener, a cook, a poultry man, and a cattleman. If shades of *Downton Abbey* are coming to mind, consider also that in 1919 the lady's maid married the head gardener! By all accounts, Sarah and Francis treated their servants quite well. They had built a pond on the property by lining a spring-fed stream with granite and having sand delivered to form a shoreline. Arthur and the other servants and their families were welcome to swim in it for recreation (see photo). It seems to have been an idyllic place.



Arthur Brennan (left) in Skinner Pond c.1910

1917 1953 1956 1957 1958

Sarah Skinner remarries to Charles Shea in New York. The couple continues to occupy the mansion. Charles Shea dies.

Sarah Skinner Shea dies at home. The mansion is sold to a member of Sarah's family. The property is sold to the Archdiocese of Boston.

The mansion becomes "The Convent."

MEMORIES FROM ACROSS THE YEARS

Alumnae from across the decades have different memories of the convent, depending on when they attended Ursuline. Here are just a few:

Taylor Ferracane '07: My mother's grandfather worked at the convent when it was a private residence! Years later, she was a member of the Class of '67 and I was a member of the Class of '07!

Norah Cantwell Blaney '74:
My sister Carol '84 had her First
Communion in the chapel. Many
fond memories.

Betsy Keteltas '92: From my kindergarten graduation to my high school graduation – more memories than you can imagine!

Irja Sheppard Finn '80: Coming to visit years later and staying in "the pit!"

Jacqueline Leveroni Noyes '03: Confession in the convent!

Julie Kelley '03: I knew there was an amazing history hidden in that place! I felt like I was walking through the Great Gatsby every time we visited.



Among their other pursuits, the Skinners, like Isabella Stewart Gardner, were avid horticulturists and used the Dedham property to satisfy their gardening interests. The mansion, especially the garden room, was often filled with plants and flowers that had been grown outside. Francis and Sarah experimented with developing their own strain of rhododendron. Graduates of Ursuline will instantly recall the gorgeous banks of rhododendrons flanking the convent stairs, and passing between those massive shrubs on their graduation day. These shrubs are a direct legacy of the Skinners. Sarah's love for rhododendrons is evident in her formal portrait painted on the grounds of Federal Hill Farm by Hermann Dudley Murphy in 1905 (image page 3).

TRANSITIONS

In 1914, fourteen years after their marriage, Francis and Sarah Skinner made one of their frequent trips to Europe. Sarah returned earlier than usual, in April, to accompany her sister who was anticipating the birth of her first child. In early May, she received word via telegram that Francis had suffered a fatal heart attack on the voyage home. On board the ship S.S. Caronia, some Oriental rugs in the cargo hold caught fire, causing pandemonium among the steerage passengers. While this chaotic event was unfolding, Mr. Skinner suffered a heart attack; the ship's surgeon attempted to save him but was unable to do so. Arthur Brennan drove to New York to meet the Caronia, and assisted with the transport of Mr. Skinner's belongings back to Dedham, where the funeral services were held in the mansion. Newspapers reported on the funeral, with the May 8 Boston Journal noting that "his family disapproved of his choice" (in marriage) but that "reconciliation with his family came at the deathbed of his father." Mr. Skinner was buried in the Gardner mausoleum in Mount Auburn cemetery in Cambridge.

Mrs. Skinner was now a widow in charge of managing quite a large property. She sold the *Constellation*, Francis' yacht, in August of 1914 to Herbert Mason Sears, a Harvard classmate of Francis. Ironically, the one-year anniversary of Francis' death was marked by another tragedy, the sinking of the *Lusitania*. We can only imagine Sarah Skinner's pain upon hearing of this news on the anniversary of her husband's death at sea.

Sarah Skinner remained a widow until 1917 when she married Charles Andrew Shea in New York. The couple lived and entertained at 65 Lowder Street and continued to employ numerous servants, including Arthur Brennan, until Charles' death in 1953. When Sarah died in 1956, the



The grand foyer in the Skinner years



Kindergarten in the foyer, 1959. Sally Seufert Holmes is third from the left in the front row.

property was sold to a member of the Endicott family, who were related to the Skinners. They owned the house and land for only nine months before selling it to the Archdiocese of Boston in 1957, who purchased it for the Ursuline Sisters in exchange for the deed to the Arlington Street building. This exchange enabled them to relocate Ursuline Academy from Boston to Dedham. During these transitional years, Arthur Brennan acted as a resource, making himself available to answer questions about the house. On his trips to the mansion, he would often be accompanied by his grandchildren, Sally and John Seufert, who also lived around the corner on Highland Street.

Once the Ursulines occupied the house, it served two purposes: as home to the sisters and as class space for a kindergarten and the first classes of the Academy. In 1958-59, the school building was constructed and the mansion became known as "the convent," serving as the place where the sisters could relax, congregate, and pray after spending long days educating their students for lives of passion and purpose. The mansion's library became a chapel where the sisters would partake in daily Mass, and the garage/carriage house became the Provincialate, home to the sister serving as the Ursuline Provincial.

WHAT NEXT?

In the summer of 2014, the Ursuline Order finalized the decision to merge its Northeast and Central Provinces in order to strengthen its missions. The sisters still residing in the convent moved to join other Ursuline communities on the East Coast. Separately, the Carriage House was converted to three classrooms to accommodate the school's enrollment. As part of this merger, ownership of the convent was formally transferred to Ursuline Academy. School leadership is in the process of assessing the best use for this graceful treasure that is the soul of the campus. In recent years, it has been the site of student retreats, receptions and meetings, and plans are to continue that tradition. However, there is much work to be done to restore the building and terraces to their original splendor; making it suitable for regular student use requires considerable interior and exterior repair work, as well as updates to bring it up to code for accessibility and safety. Whatever the convent's future uses may be, the Academy is committed to cherishing this beautiful treasure for the benefit of students and the school community.

The Ursuline Convent story is a fascinating mixture of parallels and incongruity. Once the site of splendor and extravagance, it later became home to women who had taken a vow of poverty. Yet through the years, it has always been home to strong women: Sarah Skinner, who overcame scorn and discrimination by Boston society, and the Ursuline Sisters, who educated young women for lives of purpose even at a time when education was sometimes considered superfluous for girls. We can only imagine how pleased Sarah might have been to know that her beloved property became home to a school dedicated to educating young women to bring out the best in themselves.



Sarah and Charles Shea entertaining in the mansion with Sarah's niece, c.1932. The man on the left is wait staff.

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ALUMNAE

A LEAP

Alexanderia the Great

Donna Masotta Purnell '80 pursues her dream career as an escape artist

by Maura K. Sullivan

Alexanderia the Great is known worldwide as the "Modern Day Houdini," famous for her death-defying underwater escapes. She has set world records on live television on the *Fox and Friends* morning show and as a contestant on *America's Got Talent*.

But back in the late '70s, Alexanderia the Great went by *Donna Masotta* at Ursuline Academy.

"This actually all began when I was at Ursuline, when I was 16 and had a passion for Houdini," Donna said. "One of the greatest things about being a member of the Ursuline community is that they instill in us to be unique and show people that uniqueness."

After graduation, Donna moved on to a teaching career and had three children with her husband, Bill Purnell. She continued practicing her escapes all along, training with Bill in the pool in their backyard, until one day he convinced her to show her talent to the world.

It is no coincidence that Donna's favorite escape is called the "Leap of Faith" because it was quite the leap from her daily life as "Mom" to performing as "Alexanderia the Great."

Alexanderia the Great's "Leap of Faith" calls for five feet of chains attaching her cuffed hands to her cuffed feet, a 15-pound weight belt, and an additional 25 feet of chain wrapped around her with eight padlocks. Once the restraints are locked into place, she jumps into the pool and the challenge begins. Under two minutes later, she emerges, out of breath, but free of all the chains.

Her fantastic escapes may happen quickly, but they require hours of intense training. Donna is a certified free diver, a form of diving that involves holding your breath rather than using a breathing apparatus, and can hold her breath for four minutes and 20 seconds. She trains in the pool three times a week with her husband's assistance, breaking down and perfecting the difficult components of her escapes. She also does weight training both on land and underwater.

"My husband gave me the name Alexanderia the Great," Donna said. "He told me, 'I really think you can take over the world with what you are doing, much like Alexander the Great. You touch so many people. This world needs someone to show people how to escape the boxes they find themselves in."

With her family's support, Donna was inspired to get out of her comfort zone and pursue her lifelong dream. She has used the fame and notoriety that have come with her success to help others, inspired by Ursuline's motto of *Serviam*. She has turned her escapes into a motivational speaking tool, presenting to children and adults alike.

"I have tried to use escapes to reach people in a special way. We all have something that makes us unique. What can trap us is the inability to withstand being uncomfortable. Maybe we all need to be escape artists and escape the things that restrain us using the two keys that we possess; our head and our heart."

One of the greatest things about being a member of the Ursuline community is that they instill in us to be unique and show people that uniqueness.



To watch videos of Alexanderia the Great's fantastic escapes, visit: www.alexanderiathegreat.com



OF FAITH

Sister Anne Marie Elizabeth

Anne Marie Warner '06 journeys from an accounting career to consecrated religious life

Creating your own career path and shifting gears throughout life seem to have become more the norm than the exception. Even so, it's not every day that you hear about someone leaving a job at a major accounting firm to enter the religious life. Yet that is exactly what *Anne Marie Warner* has chosen to do, literally bringing her yearbook quote to life: "What you are is God's gift to you, and what you make of yourself is your gift to God" (Anonymous).

Sister Anne Marie Elizabeth is now in her second year of formation as a novice with the Sisters of Life in Suffern, New York. The Sisters of Life is an order founded in 1991 by John Cardinal O'Connor for the protection and enhancement of every form of human life. In addition to the traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, they take a fourth vow to protect and enhance the sacredness of human life, and live out this vow through outreach to women in crisis pregnancies, providing practical assistance such as housing, professional services, and companionship, and even inviting the women to live in the convent for a time. They also help staff the Villa Maria Guadalupe, a retreat house that offers educational opportunities and programs for young adults, married couples, families, priests and religious.

Anne Marie, the oldest of five children, was known at Ursuline as "the girl from Michigan," having moved to Needham between 9th and 10th grade.

It was actually a move back to the area for her family – her mother Mary Beth graduated from Ursuline in 1980. While in school, she filled her spare time by participating in volleyball, track, student council, and other activities. During her junior year, she attended a retreat to consider the question of "what is God's plan for my life," and first felt invited to consider life as a consecrated religious. She continued on the traditional path of college and work life for the next seven years, however, attending Bentley University and staying on for a fifth year to earn a Masters degree in accounting. After graduating, Anne Marie worked as an auditor for two years in Boston for a major accounting firm. "I loved working as an accountant, and considered sticking with it and embracing marriage and family life," she reflected recently. But the question of a different calling had taken hold and never left her mind.

After hearing of the Sisters of Life from a friend, Anne Marie made the decision to attend a "come and see" retreat in November of 2012, where she came to the conclusion that giving her life over completely to God was the right path. She returned to Boston, finished out the year as an accountant, and entered the Sisters of Life as a postulant in September of 2013. The sisters undergo three years of prayer and study before making their first vows; at this time, they receive their first mission and are assigned to an apostolic house where they do the work of their ministry. After another five years, they take their final vows and continue their ministry, perhaps in a new location.

When asked what is the greatest challenge of consecrated religious life, Sister Anne Marie Elizabeth notes the process of adapting to the sacrifices that her life entails, such as limited contact with her family and friends. As a Sister of Life, she is entitled to one yearly two-week visit home, as well as several days in which her family can visit her. Her advice to anyone who might be considering the vocation of religious life? "It is incredible to walk with my fellow sisters and the people I am helping in my ministry. If you feel that you are hearing the call, don't be afraid – it is such a beautiful gift. Do not be afraid to follow the desires of your heart."



hearing the call, don't be afraid – it is such a beautiful gift. Do not be afraid to follow the desires of your heart.

ACADEMICS

Ten Seniors Named National Merit Commended Students

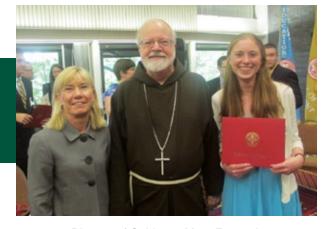
Ten members of the Class of 2015 were named Commended Students in the 2015

National Merit Scholarship Program. A Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program, was presented by Principal Keaney to these scholastically talented seniors in September.

Commended Students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2015 competition by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). The 2015 National Merit Commended Students are pictured above.:

Michaela M. Chipman Katherine R. Gioioso Niamh E. Sutherburg Alina A. Carroll Minali Venkatesh

Cassandra M. Nedder Mallory M. Whalen Katherine E. Murphy Mary E. Roche Jacqueline R. Foley



Director of Guidance Mary Ferrucci, Cardinal O'Malley, Sheila Orechia '14

Sheila Orechia '14 Cardinal Medeiros Scholar

Sheila Orechia, co-valedictorian of the Class of 2014, was awarded a prestigious Cardinal Medeiros Scholarship, a four-year full-tuition scholarship to Boston University, where she enrolled in September. Last year, Sheila was one of only twelve students from among the graduating seniors of the parochial high schools in the Archdiocese of Boston to be awarded scholarships through the Cardinal Medeiros Scholarship Program. Medeiros Scholars are chosen for their academic achievements, demonstrated leadership skills, and contributions to their schools and communities. Last spring, Sheila and her family attended a ceremony at Boston University where the scholarship was conferred by Cardinal Seán O'Malley. Sheila is the daughter of John and Terry Orechia of Foxboro.

Class of 2015 College Acceptances

April 2015 was an auspicious month for the class of 2015 in terms of college acceptances. We congratulate these women and wish them the best as they begin their college journeys and the yet-to-be-discovered joys and challenges that await them. Among the highlights:

70 members of the class of 2015

127 colleges made offers of admission 100%
accepted to and enrolling in a four-year college or university

over \$7.5 million

offered in scholarship/merit/grant money, as reported by the students

6 students attending their Early Decision schools,

the most since records have been kept

Students were accepted to schools large and small across the country: Boston College, Boston University, College of the Holy Cross, Cornell University, Emory University, Georgetown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, New York University, Northeastern, Tufts University, University of Richmond, University of Rochester, Vanderbilt, Villanova, Wake Forest, among many others.

Sr. Mary Virginia Orna, OSU Addresses Faculty

Teachers welcomed back with a view into the life and times of St. Angela Merici

"What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Mary Oliver

To herald in the school year, the Ursuline faculty and staff gather before students return to campus to solidify our identity as an Ursuline school. This past September, faculty were treated to a lecture by Sr. Mary Virginia Orna, OSU, who presented a talk titled *The Value of a Liberal Arts Education: A Fundamental Premise of St. Angela's Vision and of Ursuline Education.* Currently Professor of Chemistry at the College of New Rochelle, Sr. Mary Virginia has experience in government, not-for-profit institutions and industry. She has lectured and published widely in the areas of color chemistry and archaeological chemistry. She is a tour speaker on the roster of the American Chemical Society and has been an invited lecturer to every part of the United States and many countries in Europe and the South Pacific.

The presentation provided the faculty with insight into St. Ursula (St. Angela's inspiration), the world that St. Angela lived in, the Ursulines as heirs to St. Angela's legacy, as well as the goals and philosophy of an Ursuline education. Contrary to perception, St. Angela did not start a school for girls, although she did found an order dedicated to the education of women. Like liberal arts colleges today, the Ursuline approach to education was marked by a philosophy of openness to possibilities, an emphasis on the liberal arts as opposed to specific disciplines, a variety of outcomes, and a mindset of "both/and" rather than "either/or."

Sr. Mary Virginia drew striking parallels between the current focus on 21st century learning and the 16th-century curriculum of St. Angela, with its emphasis on active pedagogy, self-expression, and a desire to think outside the box. She said that the purpose of education is to help answer a question posed by poet Mary Oliver: "What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Faculty Notes

Ursuline's faculty members are committed and nurturing content experts who regularly engage in Professional Development. Just in the past year, they have undertaken the following professional development activities.

Senora Patricia Levin attended a week long AP Spanish institute at Manhattan College.

Mr. William Donovan attended a second AP US History institute to stay abreast of changes to the format of the AP US History test.

Ms. Samantha Kinn and **Ms. Natalie Mayo**, both English teachers, attended a *Tragedy: Ancient to Modern* class at Harvard University.

Mrs. Taryn Surabian continued her course work for a Master's degree in Science Education on site at Montana State University for six weeks over the summer. Her courses included: Thermal Biology in Yellowstone National Park; Land Use Issues in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem; Ecology of Trout Streams and Dinosaur Paleontology. Her paleontology class actually discovered dinosaur remains!

Mrs. Jennifer Brown completed the course Introduction to Environmental Science at Framingham State University.

Ms. Caitlin Chipman continues to take courses toward her Master's degree in Math at Cambridge College. She completed Abstract Algebra and Non-Euclidean Geometry over the summer, and recently completed a Professional Seminar in Mathematics II and Number Theory.

Ms. Mary-Kate Tracy-Robidoux and the religion faculty attended the Archdiocese's training session for the *Created for Love* curriculum which will be implemented this year.

Ms. Jessica Stokes attended a Reading, Writing and Research with iPads and Mobile Devices class.

The World Language Department attended the MaFLA (Massachusetts Foreign Language Association) conference.

Mrs. Mary Jo Keaney, Mrs. Mary Ferrucci, Mrs. Ann Scott, Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan, Mr. Michael Mayer, head of the English department and Mrs. Sheila Leonard, head of the Math department, attended a training session on the format of the new SAT conducted by the College Board.

ATHLETICS



Athletic Director of the Year

Ursuline Athletic Director **Michael O'Connor** was selected District
H Athletic Director of the Year by
the Massachusetts Secondary
Schools Athletic Directors
Association (MSSADA).

This award is presented annually to an athletic director from each of the eight athletic districts who has displayed outstanding leadership and meritorious achievement in interscholastic administration at the local, district and state levels. He was honored at the MSSADA President's Awards Luncheon on March 25 in Hyannis, MA. Mr. O'Connor is in his fifth year as Ursuline's AD.



Winter Track: D5 State Champs for Third Year

On February 17 at the Reggie Lewis Center, the Ursuline winter track team brought home a state title for the third year in a row. Congratulations to all the girls competing, as well as to Coaches Swanson, Barbour, Pizzi and Enos! Eleven athletes participated in the meet, including *Kathryn Brady '16*, *Alina Carroll '15*, *Kaia Corthell '16*, *Katherine Ferrara '16*, *Erin Grela '16*, *Lauren Grela '19*, *Ashley Haughton '16*, *Camille Kelley '15*, *Maeve O'Sullivan '15*, *Amy Piccolo '15*, *Delia Ryan '16*, and *Elizabeth Vhay '15*. In a total team effort, the girls also took first place at the Mass. State Track Coaches' Association Division 5 Relays held in January. In addition to the state championship, two athletes earned individual accolades for their events: *Amy Piccolo '15* was division, state and New England champion for the 600 meter dash; *Erin Grela '16* was division champion for the two mile.

Morgan O'Donnell Reaches 1,000 Points

Basketball Team Reaches State Tournament

Ursuline forward *Morgan O'Donnell '15* scored her 1,000th career point on February 16 in regular season play against Foxboro High School, becoming the fifth basketball player in school history to do so. It was a proud coaching moment for Coach Caitlin Murphy Valair '03, who was the third Ursuline player to reach 1,000 points in her senior year. The team advanced to the first round of the MIAA state tournament.



Morgan O'Donnell and Coach Valair



Seven Ursuline Seniors Commit to Inter-Collegiate Athletic Programs

Seven student-athletes from the Class of 2015 have committed to continuing their athletic careers in college. Three young women have signed National Letters of Intent to play their sport: *Morgan O'Donnell* (Assumption – Basketball), *Ashton Fagan* (Boston University – Crew), and *Amy Piccolo* (Northeastern University – Track and Field). *Alexa Held* has committed to the University of San Diego and will dive for the Swimming and Diving team, while *Abby Lake* will swim for Georgetown University, *Christina Luniewicz* will compete for the Cornell University Gymnastics team, and *Erin Harten* will run track for Dickinson College.

2014 Tennis Team Crowned South Sectional Champions

The Ursuline Academy tennis team was proclaimed Division 3 South Sectional Champions last June, defeating Dover-Sherborn by a score of 4-1. The team finished the season with a record of 18-4. As of this printing, the 2015 team is off to a strong start with ten wins and one loss.





Volleyball Team Reaches State Sectional Finals

Coach Joseph Named Coach of the Year

After going 11-4 in the regular season, the volleyball team reached the South Sectional finals, where they succumbed to Case High School. The team was led by the play of *Allie Erk Thompson '15* and *Jenny Weston '16*. Coach Kali Joseph, a math teacher at Ursuline, was named Division 3 coach of the year by the *Boston Globe*.

ARTS

Speech Team: A Year in Review

by Maggie Chipman '17



The 2015 forensic season will be one remembered for many years by the Ursuline Academy Speech Team and its coach, Dean Calusdian. During this past year, the small team of fourteen girls has earned many awards both individually and collectively, competing in a wide range of categories against students from across the state. One highlight of the season was the season's kickoff at the Gracia-Burkhill Memorial Tournament in November, where four girls impressed their judges and advanced to final rounds. At Lincoln-Sudbury High School in December, Ursuline proved that the Speech Team is a force to be reckoned with, claiming two tournament championships, and because of the girls' rankings, they earned the most points of the small schools at the tournament, thus winning the Small School Sweepstakes award. Successes continued throughout the first half of the season, both personally and as a team. Seven team members (*Michaela Chipman '15*, *Eleni Haberis '15*, *Cassandra Nedder '15*, *Caroline Ahearn '16*, *Maggie Chipman '17*, *Cara DiPietro '17*, and *Meg Johnson '17*) qualified for the state tournament in April, where Cassandra advanced to semi-finals in Prose Reading and Maggie claimed the state championship in Declamation. As of this writing, Michaela, Maggie, and Cara were set to conclude their season at the national tournament in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, each girl having claimed one of the six spots allotted per category for the Boston Diocese. Michaela and Maggie are returning to nationals for the second year, having competed in Chicago last year. The Speech Team can only be described as small but mighty, and it is making its mark, throughout the state and the country.

Boston Globe Scholastic Writing Awards

Two Ursuline students were honored this year by the *Boston Globe* Scholastic Writing Award competition: *Karina Sinha '15* won a Silver Key for her poem "My Fate" and *Minali Venkatesh '15* received an Honorable Mention for her poem "The Fall." Congratulations to both students!



The Bearitones

by Maggie Chipman '17

A new phrase has been added to the lingo that reverberates in the halls of Ursuline Academy: "The Bearitones." This combination of the UA mascot and a musical pun is the name of Ursuline's student-founded and student-run a cappella group, begun in 2013 by sisters *Michaela Chipman '15* and *Maggie Chipman '17*. This vocal group, made up of sixteen young women from different grade levels, is unique compared to other clubs at Ursuline in that it is run in a democratic style, by the members themselves. A president and secretary are elected by their peers, and the girls choose a music director to lead them in learning the arrangements. However, all girls in the group play a role, as all are

welcome to audition for solos or bring in arrangements to learn. The Bearitones have been welcomed with open arms into the high school a cappella community, having been invited annually to participate in an "A Cappella Jam" with schools such as Montrose and St. Sebastian's. The work ethic of the group is admirable, as they practice before school for several hours a week, and are always looking ahead to their next goal. "We hope to host an a cappella concert with some of the high school groups nearby. It's a great way to have fun with those who share our passion!" says *Sarah Kahler '15*, music director.

CLUB NEWS

Model UN Team Negotiates Resolutions, Earns Awards

by Jessica Stokes

Ursuline's Model UN team ("UAMUN") has been making some noise at area MUN conferences under the direction of English and social studies teacher Jessica Stokes, who arrived on the Lowder Street campus last fall. The group has sent a corps of 12-15 delegates to five conferences so far this year between October and March, consistently impressing the moderators and other coaches with their speaking and negotiating skills and their ability to think on their feet. At the conferences, the delegates participate in simulations of parliamentary-style debates by UN committees on topics such as how to handle the crisis in Ukraine, how to integrate post-revolution Egypt,

and ways to encourage nuclear nations to disarm.

A highlight of the season was the Boston College High School Model UN Conference, at which four of the seventeen Ursuline students earned "Distinguished Delegate" honors. A particularly significant learning experience (and fun weekend) was the Boston University Model UN Conference (BosMUN) in February. Twelve Ursuline delegates attended the 48-hour simulation, which hosted over 1,400 delegates from around the world, and featured opening and closing ceremonies, six committee debate sessions, and a midnight crisis session. The UA delegation was smart, articulate, and collaborative, reflecting the strong academic education community we have at Ursuline. At the conference, *Julia Fraone '18* was voted Best Speaker by her NATO 1999 committee for her work representing Spain. The Ursuline delegation had a fabulous time and made a splash at the Delegate Dance in their plaid skirts!

Throughout the season, a number of girls have been recognized for their stellar work at the conferences, including Kiara Cronin '18, Club President Carine Hajjar '17, Emily Lewis '18, Club Vice President Clare Morris '17, Liz Ronan '17, Catherine Treseler '18, and Nicole Webbe '15. Other team members who have represented Ursuline in competitions this year are Caroline Cox '16, Gaby DiMartino '18, Makenzie Donahue '16, Megan Duffy '16, Mackenzie Enos '18, Anna Fantozzi '17, Amanda Giordano '18, Liz Kaster '16, Samantha Lord '18, Bella Luciano '16, Julia Lynch '17, Laura McCracken '16, Delia McDonough '17, Carleen Mullally '16, Julia Mullert '17, Club Communications Chair Mary Ellen O'Leary '16, Maya Rao '17, and Clodagh Walsh '16.

In between conferences, the team prepares through student-led weekly meetings in which they engage in impromptu speeches and discuss topics ranging from the crisis in Syria to ways to encourage female students to speak more often in conferences. Says Ms. Stokes, "UAMUN reflects some of the strongest attributes of Ursuline students: student leadership, self-motivation, and teamwork; curiosity about the world; the ability to think logically, make coherent arguments, and speak with poise; and the belief that girls are just as smart and persuasive as boys. I am so proud of the accomplishments of this group and feel honored to be their Faculty Moderator."



Club Scene: Always Something New

If you wander around the school on Thursday at 8:05, also known as club period, you will see something new and different every semester as students and faculty form new clubs to experiment with and deepen their interests in non-academic topics.

Some clubs are here to stay, while others dwindle out to make way for new clubs, but the journey offers opportunities to explore new areas, practice skills, and make friends along the way.

Over the past year, just a few examples of new clubs are the TED-Ed Club, whose purpose is to watch and discuss TED talks having a connection to education; stagecraft, devoted to the art of mask-making, puppetry, and other theater-related projects; and the guitar club, devoted to strumming for the fun of it.







Class of 1964

Class of 1969

Class of 1974



On May 3, 2014, ladies from the "4's" and "9's" sent their enthusiastic chatter ringing through the rooms and grounds of the Convent as they reconnected with classmates on a lovely spring evening. It is wonderful to see so many alumnae returning to the place they called "home" for their formative years, and we look forward to their return in 2019!



Class of 1979



Class of 2009



Class of 1984



Class of 2004



Class of 1999



Class of 1989

Class of 1994





It was wonderful to see so many alumnae on May 2nd! We look forward to welcoming everyone back to campus soon!



Class of 2005



Class of 1965



Class of 1980



Class of 1970

Class of 1990



Class of 1985



Class of 1995

Class of 2000

Class of 1995

Bring out your INNER SPARKLE.

Ursuline Academy's 2014 Brescia Ball

Blue Hill Country Club, Canton, Massachusetts

2014 Honorees: Eve Kelley '86 and Cara Gould '89



Eat. Pray. Love. Shine.

When Ursuline Academy's 7th annual Brescia Ball was held at Blue Hill Country Club last November, it was chilly outside, but inside it was shining! A record number of guests were on hand to celebrate in glittery style and to kick off our new Bring Your Inside Out campaign while raising money to help Ursuline grow stronger every day!

The evening gave us a chance to honor two alumnae whose dedication to the *Serviam* call is deeply evident. While at Ursuline, *Eve Kelly '86* was an enthusiastic retreat participant, and learned to appreciate the value of having fun while expanding her religious formation. Since then, she has been loyally returning to her alma mater for two decades as an official retreat leader, happy to share her time, faith, and bear-shaped pancakes with the Ursuline community she loves so much. *Cara Gould '89* has also followed the call to *Serviam*, beginning with Peer Ministry at Ursuline and the desire to make a difference through small acts. Her dedication continued through her years at Boston College and a year with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, ultimately leading to her position as executive director at Camp Harbor View, a summer program in Boston for at-risk youth.

This year's Brescia Ball was capped off by a surprise flash-mob of sixteen members of the Ursuline Academy Choral Group singing a beautiful rendition of *Go the Distance* and *The Spark of Creation*, a fitting reminder of why we were there. We extend a huge thank you to our co-chairs Angela Canale P'17, '19 and Nancy McAdams P'15 and to everyone who supported, attended, or helped with the event in any way.

Eve Kelley '86, President Whiting, Cara Gould '89



Co-chairs Angela Canale and Nancy McAdams, President Whiting

Save the Date

I'll be there someday, I can go the distance,
I will find my way, if I can be strong,
I know ev'ry mile, will be worth my while,
When I go the distance, I'll be right where I belong.

- David Zippel

for Brescia Ball 2015

November 14th
at Blue Hill Country Club

ALUMNAE NOTES

Caitlin Murphy '03 was married in September. Fellow UA alumnae in the bridal party include (I to r) Sarah Russell, Abigail Majewski, Meghan George '03, Leah Schouten, Caitlin Murphy '03, Allison Hynes '03, Meghan Tubridy '03, Krista lannoni '03 and Jill Reilly '03.





The Class of 1968 had a late winter "mini reunion"... as soon as the roads were plowed! Left to right: Janet Anderson Trocchio, Peg Vanderwal Rollins, Cathy Hinckley Dugan, Cheryl Sullivan Flamen, Kathi Dunn Rogers, Sharon Reed-Eramian, Ellie Hourihan Letourneau



Thomas Christopher Casavant

Sharon Reed-Eramian '68, one of the "founding members" of Ursuline's 1967-68 Inaugural "6 Player" Basketball team, is retiring after 28+ years of teaching physical education and coaching at the high school and college levels.

Ellen Fagone Huntley '70 writes: "After a very rewarding career teaching elementary and junior high school, and living in Kailua, Hawaii for the past 38 years, I'm now enjoying semi-retirement as I teach part time for Hawaii Pacific University. Also, I'm totally enjoying life as "Grammy" to my brand new grandson!"

Jayne Graham Hayes '72 moved back to the Boston area (Natick) after being away from Mass. for 30 years! She recently married Rick Hayes.

Karen Fitzgerald Healy '83 has been appointed as an Administrative Judge at the Department of Industrial Accidents. Karen is the mother of *Sydnie Healy '16*.

Lisa Mathis Castellano '86 received a grant from YALSA, the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). Lisa has been the library media specialist at Larkspur Middle School in Virginia Beach, Virginia since September 2011.

Julie Walsh Casavant '93 and husband Christopher of Needham announce the birth of their son Thomas Christopher. He arrived on December 3, 2013 to join his proud big sister Abigail Walsh Casavant. His birth date is a very special date for our family as we celebrate our wedding anniversary!

Patricia Glynn '93 was accepted as a graduate student at the University of South Florida's College of Behavioral and Community Sciences. She is working on a Master's degree in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling, and continues to work as a writer and contributing editor for Club Business International magazine.

After graduating, *Samantha Sharma '99* went on to the University of Florida to study zoology and now works in the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida.



Rachel Linso '03, a current faculty member in the social studies department at Ursuline Academy, married Calvin Metcalf at St. John Chrysostom Church on October 25, 2014. Alumnae present included Julie Griffin-Carty '05 and Theresa (Cooney) O'Hara '02. The couple lives in Quincy with their two cats.

After working as a Banquets and Conference Service Manager in two hotels in Boston, *Annemarie Kennedy '01* took a job in 2012 at the TD Garden working as the sole Catering Sales Manager. She was promoted in November and is now an Event Operations Manager at the Garden, handling arena and private events ranging from 25 people to 16,000. She says, "I love my job and my career as an event planner! I'm a proud aunt to two nieces and three nephews, three of whom reside in Dedham. They keep my entire family on our toes! I see *Bernadette (Keegan) Cummings* and *Kathleen O'Brien* as much as possible and in May, I will be a bridesmaid in *Cara Howieson's* (2001) wedding! So proud that my Ursuline ties have led to amazing lifelong friendships!"

Christina Tsimortos '05 married Doug Hamilton, Xaverian class of 2004, on December 31, 2014.

Anne Marie Warner '06 has entered the Sisters of Life Novitiate in New York. The Sisters of Life are consecrated to protect and enhance the sacredness of all human life. Pictured with Anne Marie: Christine Warner '08 (sister), Mary Beth Mahoney Warner '80 (mother). See related story on p. 9.

Susan Bourque '07 lives in Manhattan and works as a Web Developer at The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

Gianna Absi '12 finished up her sophomore year at Boston University and then headed off to New York City and completed a 10 week summer research project on memory in the Friedman Brain Institute at Mount Sinai Hospital. "In October I will be presenting my data at a Neuroscience conference in DC!"

Victoria Masterson '13 was named to the Dean's List at Emmanuel College for both Fall and Spring semesters. Tori is planning to major in Special Education.

Kaylene Murphy '14 spent four weeks traveling to St. Thomas and Puerto Rico on Mass Maritime's training ship the *Kennedy*. During this time she took classes, performed maintenance and stood watch aboard the ship.



Annemarie Kennedy '01



Christine Warner '08, Anne Marie Warner '06, and Mary Beth Mahoney Warner '80



Gianna Absi '12



Kaylene Murphy '14

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for Reunion 2016! Saturday, May 7, 2016

Welcome home to classes ending in '1' and '6'!

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Dorothy Doyle, OSU, Passes to Eternal Rest

Sr. Dorothy Doyle, OSU, passed to eternal rest on January 27, 2015, the Feast of St. Angela Merici. Sr. Dorothy spent her life in service to the Ursuline Sisters, serving as a teacher at Ursuline Academy in Boston, Dedham, and Springfield, and as Principal of Ursuline-Dedham from 1973 – 1982. She was also known as Sr. St. James, the name she took when she became a novice. She was 93 years old.

After graduating from Mount Merici Academy in Waterville, ME in 1938, Sr. Dorothy entered the Mount Merici Convent, pronouncing her first religious vows in April, 1941 and her final vows in 1944 while a student at the College of New Rochelle. She later obtained a M.A. degree in English from Boston College, and a M.A. degree in Theology from Providence College. She served as a high school teacher in Ursuline Schools in Waterville and Sanford, Maine, and in Boston, Dedham and Springfield, Massachusetts, teaching Religion, English, Latin, Algebra I and II, Geometry, Chemistry, Biology and General Science. In addition to serving generously for nine years as Principal of Ursuline Academy in Dedham, Sr. Dorothy served for four years as Prioress of the Ursuline Convent in Dedham and four years as Provincial of the Ursuline Province of the Northeast.

Principal Mary Jo Keaney '82 remembered Sr. Dorothy with great fondness: "Sr. Dorothy was a gentle, elegant and brilliant woman of faith. She was my principal for some of my years at Ursuline, and I was blessed to see her through the years and to exchange letters with her." She is remembered as a woman of dignity and compassion, always willing to share her time with her students. Sister Dorothy is survived by a brother Terence and sister-in-law Jeannette and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a brother, George, and a sister Kathleen Hope Doyle Murphy.

In Memoriam...

Alumnae

Evelyn Bryant Vasile '54 | May 12, 2015

Barbara Anne Connolly Lanzi '60 | April 4, 2015

Janice Gould Daly '62 | February 23, 2015

Linda Marie Vitelli Guilmette '63 | December 22, 2013

Elizabeth 'Liz' Palmieri Ennis '64 | March 9, 2015

Eleanor Glynn Kjellman '64 | March 19, 2014

Amelia Pagounis '76 | April 23, 2015

Cynthia L. Fallon '82 | June 14, 2014

Relatives & Friends

Margaret Coveney | Mother of *Barbara Coveney Harkins* '66, *Mary Coveney* '69, *Patricia Menno-Coveney* '71 and *Maureen Coveney* '72, April 7, 2014

Frank M. Ward | Father of Eileen Ward '89, April 18, 2014

Frances M. Cantwell | Mother of Norah Cantwell Blaney '74, Frances Cantwell LeMieux '75, Amy Cantwell Olson '77, Ruth Cantwell Keeley '78 and Carol Cantwell '84, June 6, 2014

Joseph W. Praught III | Father of *Elizabeth Praught '03* and *Carolyn Praught '07*, June 27, 2014

Daniel Stott | former staff member and husband of **Lydia Cutter**, Guidance Office, September 17, 2014

Brendan Dillon | Father of *Alanna Dillon Suda '91* and husband of Mary Ann Dillon, former faculty, November 11, 2014

Deacon Joseph Delaney | Father of *Joanne Delaney Burke '71*, November 17, 2014

Guy Tomase | Father of *Holly Tomase* '89 and husband of Carol Tomase, former faculty, December 29, 2014

Louis J. Ferracane | husband of *Janet Leigh Cooper Ferracane '67*, father of *Taylor Ferracane '07*, January 3, 2015

Albert J. Vasile | husband of Evelyn Bryant Vasile '54 | January 20, 2015

Sally White | former faculty member, mother of Susan White Manty '75 and Nancy White McDonald '80, March 16, 2015

Zoe Galvin | mother of Sarah Galvin '13, March 30, 2015



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