Taking on The Headless Horseman in One Week!

One week was all that drama workshop students had to put together Washington Irving’s classic *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*! As in the other St. Ambrose summer workshops—creative writing, science and debate, students took a “crash course” in developing skills that they could then apply once school resumed. In this case, the drama students strengthened their memorization skills. Although students had to come the first day with their individual lines memorized, they had just a few days to learn how their part fit into the greater production as well as to memorize what and who needed to be on stage and when. “Memorizing for the play was definitely helpful for recitations and future exams. I

Faculty Focus: Allison Ruedig

Allison Ruedig is a good steward of her gifts, like the servant in the Gospel parable who makes ten talents with the one talent he is given. Growing up, Miss Ruedig received the gift of a classical education, first through the Mother of Divine Grace online classical curriculum and then at Thomas Aquinas College, a liberal arts college in California. She fell in love with the idea of God as Goodness, Truth and Beauty and with finding Him in creation through math and science, in theology and direct revelation in Sacred Scripture, and in our minds in literature. Learning how to learn, the essence of classical education, prepared Miss Ruedig to share Goodness, Truth and Beauty.

Without even waiting for college graduation, Miss Ruedig began teaching online Latin classes for Mother of Divine Grace at age 19. “Teaching is a calling for me... [Classical education] was my gift to give my students and to thank God for His gifts,” commented Miss Ruedig. After teaching at Chesterton Academy in Chicago last year, she is now helping her St. Ambrose students encounter Goodness, Truth and Beauty, and her sixth grade Religion students, for example, are just gobbling it up as they read the Bible and delve more deeply into their faith. “I want to give the world what it needs the most,” said Miss Ruedig. In sharing God –Goodness, Truth and Beauty—with this young generation, she is renewing hope in troubled times and multiplying her talents for God’s glory... just as a good steward would.
was really preparing my brain for more recitations at St. Ambrose,” recounted St. Ambrose 7th grader Emma Manke.

For Emma, the key to the production’s success was director-instructor Angela Hineline’s organized approach that emphasized teamwork and respect. “[Mrs. Hineline] is very encouraging and knows how to lift a spirit. She is amazing with acting and expressing true feeling.” Seeing firsthand all the components that go into a successful play, Emma “learned how to value the people backstage.” The drama workshop team pulled together for a wonderful rendition of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow with Emma Manke as “Fran,” one of the storytellers at the campfire that spooked Ichabod Crane before he even encountered the Headless Horseman on the bridge that night!

In addition to demonstrating this focus through NAPCIS’ 15 “standards of excellence,” St. Ambrose must define and reach goals to move the school forward in its mission. St. Ambrose board vice president Grant Emmel commented on the process: “We are grateful for the visiting team’s efforts and recommendations as we continue helping parents prepare their children for the future by our unceasing efforts to improve St. Ambrose Academy in all areas.” Just as Catholics must re-dedicate themselves to the path to holiness each day, “the accreditation process through NAPCIS is our chance as a school to recommit ourselves to our noble mission to form [students] academically and spiritually.” The board of directors and administration have already begun working on NAPCIS’ recommendations in anticipation of the next accreditation deadline in 2022.

### Benefactor Profile: The Ries Family

When Darin Ries met his wife Molly, he recognized she had something he didn’t: a comprehensive, classical education. She had learned how to learn, enabling her to excel in medical studies even while raising young children. Molly is a nurse midwife at the Reedsburg Medical Center while she completes her family nurse practitioner program. Darin observes a “great chasm” between Molly’s education and his own public education. His education and poor catechesis influenced him to make bad choices. “I want my kids to know how to live their lives so they don’t have to make the many bad decisions I made,” reflected Darin.

While homeschooling their children, the Rieses encountered St. Ambrose through co-foundress and board director Joan Carey. “When we got to know about St. Ambrose, we realized that we couldn’t give [our children] what St. Ambrose could give,” recalled Molly. Abby, the oldest daughter, has gained much confidence during her 5 years at St. Ambrose. Molly and Darin cite the Christian ethos and love, extraordinary academic training and support, and broad social, service and extracurricular activities to explain Abby’s success. Further, Abby’s individuality is honored. Darin and Molly are excited to support this mission generously beyond tuition commitments because they want many other students to have the advantage of this classical and Catholic combination not found anywhere else in south central Wisconsin. It’s making all the difference for Abby, who “has really blossomed and shone” here, said Molly. They can’t wait for their other children to attend, and Molly muses: “I look forward to the day when [the kids] all start speaking in Latin together.”