The Ambrosian
Vol. XI, Issue 3, April 2018

A Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Show!

THANK YOU to all the St. Ambrose Academy friends and supporters—and Mary Poppins fans—who came out to see our 2018 musical the last weekend in March. A record 1854 guests came to see Mary Poppins; the cast and crew’s many months of hard work resulted in a fantastic production.

“Aspiring for greatness is never easy,” said Mary Poppins director Angela Hineline in her message to the cast. “We, as a company, have learned so much about teamwork and the power of prayer while going through this process.”

“Playing Mary Poppins was a dream come true,” adds SAA senior Maria Marsland. “I had so much fun working with everyone on this show, and I can’t wait to come back to watch SAA musicals in future years!”

The Mary Poppins team eagerly awaits news from the Overture Center to see whether the program will again receive Tommy Awards recognition for excellence in high school musical theater. We predict there will be many smiling SAA faces at the Tommy Awards program on June 10!

Easter Matching Appeal through Pentecost (May 20th)

If you love what we’re doing but haven’t made the commitment to financially support us – please don’t wait any longer. As a young independent school without subsidies, we are simply a charitable work. We depend on almsgiving. Our cost to educate one student with an exceptional teaching staff is nearly $8,500, which is out of reach for half of our families. So this year and every year, we provide generous tuition assistance, so no one is ever denied an outstanding education due to finances.

Right now a group of extraordinary donors have put forward a generous matching challenge, to earn up to an additional $36,000 for us to be strong for our families! Gifts from every BRAND NEW donor (and every donor who’s been away for more than 18 mos) will be matched 2-for-1, while new gifts from current donors will be matched dollar-for-dollar. Extra help is needed this year, to help us create student leaders who thrive in life, and who are specially equipped and driven to re-evangelize our communities.

Please visit www.ambroseacademy.org/donate to make your most generous gift today, or mail your contribution to the address at right. Contact Development Director Joseph Draves for more details or questions. Thank you for supporting our young men and women to their extraordinary potential!

Save the Date

Mark your calendar for these upcoming SAA events!
More information is on our website.

● Sunday, May 27 ~ Graduation Mass and Commencement Exercises
● Jun. 11-15 and 18-22 ~ Summer Workshop Series: learning skills from “Farm to Table” (for students entering 5th-9th in the fall)
● Tuesday, Sept. 4 ~ Fall Term Begins
● Saturday, Dec. 8 ~ 12th Annual Benefit Dinner honoring Bishop Morlino
Welcoming New Directors

As the St. Ambrose Academy Class of 2018 prepares for Commencement, the school community can reflect on the school’s remarkable growth in the 15 years since its founding, including an outstanding faculty, enhanced course offerings, ever-expanding extracurricular opportunities, and tenfold growth in school enrollment.

Ensuring that St. Ambrose continues to thrive as it grows requires talented, dedicated leadership. The school has been blessed with devoted founders who have steadfastly continued in leadership roles over the years. As St. Ambrose enters a new phase of expansion, the SAA Board of Directors is changing and expanding. In recent months, founding St. Ambrose board members Joan Carey and Robert Marsland have retired from their board positions, and the St. Ambrose board has recently welcomed Diane Marsland, Tom Rhatican, Katie Haun, and Ken Ballweg as directors.

“With the departure of two of our founding board members, after nearly 15 years of service, we have been fortunate to welcome four new members who share a commitment to Catholic education and enthusiasm for our classical approach,” said SAA President David Stiennon. “All these members bring their own special insights based on their experience in administration, business, or education. As we move toward the completion of our long-range plan of educating two sections of students in every grade, we face many new challenges, including designing and funding our own facilities. I am so grateful to all the members for their generosity in sharing their abilities to advance the Catholic education of youth in our community.”

Planning for a New Home

Since St. Ambrose Academy’s founding in 2003, school leadership has worked to ensure prudent stewardship of resources as it strives to provide Madison-area families with access to a classical education rooted in the Catholic faith. With Bishop Morlino’s enthusiastic support, St. Ambrose expects ongoing growth and success.

“Our analysis indicates that the next five years will be a period of continued enrollment growth and expanded academic achievement,” says St. Ambrose president David Stiennon. “We are thus beginning the process for obtaining new school space for classes beginning September 7, 2021. We will consult with fundraising, design, and construction professionals to assist us in preparing the space we will need in 2021. A location has not yet been determined.” [See adjacent facilities timeline for more details.]

“St Thomas Aquinas Parish has generously shared its education wing with us since 2004. It is our long-range plan to have a school with an enrollment of 280. Well before reaching that level, our current space will be inadequate for school needs. The Parish has recently let us know that it will require its education wing space for parish programs beginning in 2021,” said Stiennon.

As St. Ambrose Vice President Grant Emmel told school parents at the Spring State-of-the-School meeting, when it comes to our new facilities “[w]e are working with a clean sheet of paper; we are not limited, at this time, by any one thing and this is very exciting.”

The St. Ambrose community is very enthusiastic to begin this long-awaited building initiative. “We would never have made it without the generosity of STA, but we simply do not have what is needed for an academic school,” said Dr. Constance Nielsen, Director of Classical Education at St. Ambrose. “We are absolutely thrilled at the prospect of having things that most schools take for granted, like a library! Or a room with biology specimens! Or even a gym! Our school community will benefit immensely from teachers being able to create their own permanent learning environment in the classroom, not only by simply increasing efficiency but by making the school feel like home.”

St. Ambrose Academy Facilities Timeline

- March 2018: Announce Location Strategy
- June 2018: Complete Needs Assessment
- October 2018: Define Concept Strategies
- December 2018: Identify Site
- April 2019: Complete Initial Design
- May 2019: Begin Capital Campaign
- February 2020: Complete Design to Bid
- June 2020: Building Contract Financing
- August 2020: Begin Construction/Renovation
- September 7, 2021: Begin Classes in New Building

From left to right: Tom Rhatican, David Stiennon, Grant Emmel, Katie Haun, Diane Marsland, and Ken Ballweg.