The Ambrosian
Newsletter of St. Ambrose Academy
Vol. XII, Issue 4, July 2019

FROM FOUNDING TO FLOWERING WITH NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOAN CAREY

“She lives St. Ambrose,” said new St. Ambrose Academy (SAA) Board President Ken Ballweg, speaking emphatically about Joan Carey in the new role of Executive Director for the school.

As a founding parent with six SAA graduates - most recently Catherine this May - few people know SAA inside and out like Joan does. As Ken pointed out, “She knows the families. She knows the staff. She knows the history.” Furthermore, having served on the board of directors from 2003 to 2017, Joan is the perfect person to act as a liaison between the board of directors and the school organization and to oversee the operations of the school. In particular, Joan will coordinate the development, academic and administrative programs. This coordination is especially important as SAA secures the funding and site for our very own school home.

Joan is fresh off her involvement with the $30 million campaign to rebuild the St. Paul Catholic Center; she served on the executive committee and as an executive assistant to Fr. Eric Nielsen and Senior Director of Advancement Scott Hackl. In addition, Joan volunteers for the executive committee of the North Central Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Joan is also the president of

ALUMNI PROFILE: MICHAEL MILLS

Michael Mills, SAA Class of 2015, is bringing beautiful music to Madison. Just after completing his Bachelor of Music degree in Organ Performance at the University of Kansas (KU), Michael will be playing some of his favorite music in collaboration with former SAA faculty member Aristotle Esguerra and a special choir at a free performance, “Music of the Baroque Mass” on Friday, July 26, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center at UW-Madison.

Even during his time at SAA, Michael was an accomplished musician, often playing the organ at Masses with Bishop Morlino and singing in the SAA schola. The rewarding and challenging SAA curriculum gave him the drive to take his skills to the next level. Desiring to raise his heart and the hearts of others toward Heaven first led Michael to KU, “I consider every day how desperately our world needs the arts and humanities. How much deeper would our human experience be? How much more humane would our world be?”

This fall he will expand his expertise through the Master of Music in Church Music program at KU, focusing on choral music. Congratulations, Michael, upon your graduation and many thanks as you stir our souls with beautiful music!
Thank you to CG Schmidt for the incredible support of St. Ambrose Academy as a business sponsor!

“As a company founded on values deeply rooted in the Catholic faith, CG Schmidt has been a proud supporter of the St. Ambrose Academy for nearly nine years. We’re firm believers that their mission of providing a classical education for all students makes for better students, better adults and a better, stronger community. Just as we build our buildings on firm foundations so that they can stand the test of time and endure, through their teachings, the St. Ambrose Academy gives their students a strong foundation on which to build their lives in a lasting, meaningful way. We’re proud to support the Academy, their students, and their mission here in Madison.”

Pictured: 2019 SAA Valedictorian Brianna Moreland with 2019 commencement speaker, CG Schmidt Vice President Sarah Dunn.

Students had a blast at two exciting Summer Workshops in June: Beauty, Science and Thrills: The Wonders of Water and The Uses of Shapes & Structures! SAA faculty and special guests including Msgr. James Gunn, Fr. Andrew Showers, and other local experts led students into studies of the sciences, theology and other humanities through field research, experiments and creative projects like making a stained glass window to give students a greater understanding of the world around us. Best of all, students were able to do more in-depth research at the Kalahari Waterpark and Little Amerricka to put their newfound knowledge and skills to the test!

Faith in Action: Claire Kramar, class of 2021, raised $3,953.11 for a local 8 Miles for Water event, which will support 79 children to have clean water for life. Participants carried buckets of water to represent the long journeys that many undergo to the nearest water that is often unclean. Thank you Claire for your service and love for others!

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Please join newly elected Board President Ken Ballweg, Vice President Katie Haun, Secretary David Stiennon, Treasurer Diane Marsland and Directors Grant Emmel, Greg Wagner and Tom Rhatian in warmly welcoming Joan Carey to this crucial role!

STRIVING FORWARD WITH THE 2019 GRADUATES

“поздравляю вас, выпускачики!”

If you aren’t fluent in Russian like SAA Salutatorian Dmitry Pinchuk, that means “Congratulations, Graduates!” Congratulations are very much in order for Dmitry and the Class of 2019 as well as the eighth graders who graduated on May 26! Yet, as St. Paul wrote, “Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God’s upward calling, in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:8-14).”

For as hard as these eighth grade and senior graduates have worked, their mission is not yet complete. In many ways, their mission is just beginning. While Dmitry is taking a year off before beginning an engineering track at UW-Madison, he will not be vacationing. Instead, Dmitry is returning to his native Russia to study at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. When he completes his study abroad experience, Dmitry will then match his gifts to different areas of engineering and hit the ground running back in Madison.

Fortunately, Dmitry feels prepared for his ambitious plans with the foundation in math that he received at SAA. “One of my favorite memories was going out to lunch with [my math teacher, Mr. Carey,] after taking the Calculus AP Exam, and I enjoyed being in his class,” Dmitry remembered.

He will also head into the adult world with a mature grasp of his Russian Orthodox faith honed by studying the similarities and differences between the Orthodox faith and the Catholic Church at SAA. Dmitry discovered that all Christians are united “in their desire to attain salvation, help others, and become better versions of themselves.”

Isaac Carrano closed his eighth-grade year by winning the Jerry Award for Outstanding Young Performer for his leading role as “Scarecrow/Hunk” in the SAA production of The Wizard of Oz this spring. The Jerry Awards recognize excellence in high school musical productions, but SAA is unique in incorporating middle school actors (and even some elementary school actors) in its performances while still achieving at a high level.

But, just as he isn’t satisfied with his race times after a successful cross country season last fall, Isaac also wants to improve his dancing, singing and acting to contribute to more award-winning shows in his high school years. Going into high school, Isaac also plans to discern his vocation, following the advice given him and his SAA peers by vocations director Fr. Greg Ihm. “We should concentrate more on our vocation and reflect on what our skills are,” Isaac said.

These young men and their SAA classmates are accomplished. But, they’re not self-satisfied. Rather, they are listening for God’s call and striving forward to become the best versions of themselves. Congratulations to the class of 2019 from your alma mater and we look forward to seeing the magnificent ways you shape the world!