



PATHWAYS

February 2008

SCA MENTOR PROGRAM

By Nora Sharkey Murphy '57

Participating in SCA's Mentoring Program during their junior year widened horizons, introduced new career options and convinced members of the Class of 2008 that they "can be anything I want to be."

Six of the 14 students selected see it as "the highlight" of their four years on Williamsbridge Road. Being paired with "a woman who has been able to succeed in her career" and learning "from her experience where to go next in life" has made them more confident about their futures.

They helped teachers, pharmacists, lawyers and medical professionals during their year-long mentoring experience which taught lessons not only about careers but also about how life is lived.

The Mentoring Experience

The mentoring experience served to expand what the girls agree has been a good educational experience. The diversity of the student body has enriched them and the academic courses have made them confident that college will be challenging but "a challenge we can meet."

Stephanie Rodriguez wasn't sure she wanted to be at Saint Catharine's much less where she would be four years later; Open House convinced her to choose SCA. Her year working with a physician's assistant was one of many experiences in "a school where teachers are helpful and offer a lot of opportunities to explore who you are." Christina Julien's year with an assistant district attorney in the Bronx DA's Office offered the opportunity to fol-

low cases through the system. She can see herself working to make the world better through law. "Anything is possible. I know that now," she says pointing to experiences that taught her "I can exceed my own expectations."

Finding out what doesn't



Stacia Williams '07 with mentor Sr. Mary Catherine Redmond



Mayeli Hernandez '09 with mentor Deirdre Feerick, Deputy Director Administrative Services, NYC Council

appeal to her was the most important lesson of the time Eliana Lezama spent with a veterinarian. "I love animals. I liked helping with them; I just couldn't help euthanize them," she smiled. Eliana will look to other options in medicine for her future.

Jocelyn Boez's experience with a pharmacist at Saint Barnabas Hospital gave her an inside look at the career she has dreamed of. Jocelyn attended case meetings and listened to medical professionals discuss treatment options. She found them "thoughtful, always concerned about the patients." When her advice on the treatment of a newborn in the neonatal unit was



SCA Mentors: (back row left to right); Karen Wagner, Evelyn Castro, Dolores Peters, Sr. Mary Catherine Redmond, Christine Lazaros, (Seated left to right); Sr. Christine Hennessy, Christine Morena, Patricia Byrne, Wilma Guzman, Sandra Lombardi, Deirdre Feerick

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If you are interested in becoming a mentor, contact Noreen White at nwhite@scahs.org



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The SCA Mission

Sr. Patricia Wolf, RSM '62

Over the last few years, there has been extensive discussion in the Catholic press and the Catholic educational community about a number of critical challenges facing Catholic education at all levels. Chief among these challenges are those associated with schools understanding, acting upon, and meeting their mission.

Founded in 1889, there is a great respect for tradition at St. Catharine Academy (SCA). Over these 118 years, SCA has consistently served families within its geographic reach, striving to meet the educational needs of the young women from the broad and diverse range of families it

serves. Now, as before, students come from families that value education and see it as one of the leading ways in which to advance and achieve in our society. All SCA students are prepared for higher education. Outstanding academic performance is the expectation, with 97% of our most recent graduating class beginning college this past fall with more than \$3 million awarded in academic scholarships.

Fidelity to Our Tradition

At one time the faculty of SCA was populated with many Sisters of Mercy, as well as members of other religious orders. While these numbers are far fewer today, the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy and our foundress, Catherine McAuley, is integral to its identity. So, we begin with profound reverence for religious faith and service to others. Without these roots, SCA would run the risk of becoming no more than a very good alternative to some public schools or an elite urban private school. Faith or spirituality is far more than simply saying a prayer at the beginning of the school day and before each class (which we do). It is about each of us making ourselves available to our situation and environment (which we also do).

Catherine McAuley was raised at a time of Catholic persecution in Ireland. She transformed the limits of this experience into a

capacity to dialogue beyond Catholic circles. At SCA, this same dynamic is present and we need to grow in our understanding of what a wonderful gift we have been given. While more than 75% of our students are Catholic, the understanding of our faith tradition is shared with faculty and students of other Christian traditions, as well as those who are Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu, through formal religion classes, prayer services, and liturgy. It provides us with a marvelous opportunity to learn about and appreciate other faiths and cultures. In a world often separated and fractured by intolerance to and the misunderstanding of religious beliefs, at SCA we have the potential to plant the seeds of reverence for one another.

The Lesson of Service

I cannot imagine a Mercy school without the tradition of service. We believe it is so important to the development of faith that for graduation SCA requires that each student participate in service. This goes beyond doing good things for people. We do this because we want our students to grow and deepen their capacity for empathy; we want to engage them in dialogue about the root causes of human suffering; we want them to learn the importance of sharing their gifts, talents, and knowledge with others; and we want them to engage in opportunities that broaden their horizons and impact their understanding.

Mostly, we want them to walk in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley — who believed that to open ourselves meant that we could and would only know another person when we experienced their misfortune, which often was greater than our own. ❖

St. Catharine Academy

2250 Williamsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10469-4891

Phone: 718-882-2882
Fax: 718-231-9099

www.scahs.org

Sr. Patricia Wolf, RSM '62
President

Sr. Ann M. Welch, RSM
Principal

Angela Cabassa
Director, Alumnae Relations

Cathy Bostley
Database Manager

Contributing Writers:

Sr. Rhea Bean, RSM
Angela Cabassa
Nora Sharkey Murphy '57
Sr. Patricia Wolf, RSM '62

taken seriously, she “knew this is what I want to do.”

Her year in the Bronx District Attorney’s office is the year Sabina Dzaferovic “grew up.” The senior admits she has been sheltered by her parents “for all the good reasons” and welcomed the chance to learn about very different people. It showed her that there are ways “to help make life better.” Sabina will do that by getting a degree in engineering and moving on to law school.

Susen Saeed thought she knew a lot about working with children thanks to time spent with her niece and nephew. That changed when she spent time in an elementary school classroom working with the teacher. “It’s hard work but I want to do it,” she said smiling, “I saw first-hand how important a teacher is and how the hard work pays off.”

Susen came to SCA from a Greek Orthodox elementary school and a Muslim worshipping community. She welcomed being part of a school that “made me aware of how important faith is” through morning prayer and worship.

The Future

They spoke about the warmth and commitment of the mentors who give their time to help younger women be better equipped to move into their futures. That these women offered “to be there when we wanted to talk” was “awesome.” In Elena’s words, “I came in as a girl and will leave as a woman.” ❖



Wilma Guzman (left) and Linda Nguyen ‘09

SCA Always Opened Doors

By Nora Sharkey Murphy ‘57

From the beginning, Saint Catharine Academy offered a foundation for the future and a grounding in spirituality to the young women who walked through its doors.

Gertrude Gearity Karabin ‘39

remembers the nuns whose dedication to learning helped young women prepare for their futures. She came to the “old academy” on Manhattan’s West Side from a large parish school. The academy’s small classes, academic challenges and individual attention enriched her life. “We were given the structure in the pursuit of study,” she remembers.

Being a legal secretary wasn’t Gertrude’s plan when she left SCA but family needs put her career in nursing on hold. She attributes her 44 years as a trusted assistant doing work now labeled “paralegal” to the lessons learned at the academy. “There was always a balance between spiritual life and academics; that has served me well throughout my life,” she says.

Emilie Cozzi ‘57 was riding her bike when she saw the new academy under construction. She chose the school and was among the first class to begin high school on Williams-bridge Road. She discovered “a place where academics and a wide array of activities broadened students’ interest and developed their talents.” SCA’s Drama Club and its director Eleanor Lanning cultivated Emilie’s interest in speech and the performing arts. Experiences she carried into her career as a professor of speech and

college administrator at The City University of New York. There are echoes of the SCA stage even in her retirement. Emilie is active as the director of an arts council and theater company in New York’s Orange County.

Cynthia Sundmacker Travers ‘74

came to SCA looking for the physics course she needed for admission to college as an engineering major; something the school in which she was enrolled did not offer. She found the course and “a supportive community of nuns who did all they could to make my plans happen.”

That support led to a career of “firsts.” Cynthia was the first woman admitted to New York University’s engineering honor society and the first woman chemical engineer hired by General Foods. She went on to earn an MBA, raise a daughter, travel extensively and is writing her second novel.

“I’ve had the life everyone should have,” she says; a life that might have been different without the welcome and encouragement of Sister Gertrude Moran and those at SCA.

SCA has set the tone, offered the skills, established the goals for the women who come looking toward their futures. For each, a teacher, a mentor, a new experience has been a step toward the motto over the Laconia Avenue door: “America behold thy strength and thy glory: woman pure, enlightened, tender and wise.” ❖

Remembering a Consummate Teacher

Sr. Mary Vianney



1957 Yearbook photo: Sr. M. Vianney.

One needs to sit for just a short time with any group of alumnae to discover the powerful impact a teacher has on the lives of students. That was certainly true last February, when a small group of Florida-based SCA alumnae met for lunch in the Tampa area.

A question was posed to them: “Among the teachers you had at St. Catharine’s, are there some whom you especially remember?” Immediately, they said: “Sr. Mary Vianney. She was the consummate teacher, who would go to any lengths to make sure you understood it. She was such a good teacher! And she hadn’t even taken her final vows....” Their enthusiasm and obvious respect for Sr. Vianney made her a logical focus for this article.

Sr. Mary Vianney arrived at St. Catharine Academy in the fall of 1956, having just graduated from Manhattanville College where she majored in philosophy and minored in chemistry. At St. Catharine’s, she met the Class of ‘57 for the first time: “I had them for physics and only knew

them the one year, but it was the smartest group of women I ever had in one room, my whole life!” This former faculty member speaks appreciatively of her years at SCA: “I have happy memories of the chemistry lab on the third floor. I always had a nice homeroom there; we did our experiments there; I taught from that room and it just seemed to reflect a kind of warmth that we had at St. Catharine’s. Sr. Mary Etheldreda was the principal during my first two years, and she created an aura, a climate of excitement, charm, and friendliness. There was always something going on in the evening with students or parents. It was a refreshing, energetic kind of place, and I certainly enjoyed the four years.”

The time at SCA came to an end when this much revered teacher was transferred to St. Simon Stock where she spent three years. In 1963, she was assigned to Mercy College, having been selected as one of several young Sisters who were being prepared to assume responsibilities in the young, evolving college. There, she began as a philosophy teacher, and gradually progressed through various responsibilities, eventually becoming Dean of Students.

In the time since beginning her teaching career at St. Catharine’s, there have been many changes, one of them being that Sr. Mary Vianney is no longer called “Sister”. Now, she is known as Dr. Ann Grow; and she lives her life as a committed laywoman.

Some things, however, have remained constant in her life.

Among these is the continuity of spirit that she believes exists between Mercy College and the Sisters of Mercy. “It’s a spirit of openness to new people, a friendliness, inclusiveness and a sense that we are here to serve.” Another constant is her commitment to the educational mission of the Sisters of Mercy, at Mercy College and St. Catharine Academy. She expresses that mission as a commitment to welcome anyone who wants an education, saying, “You are welcome to come, and we’ll do our very best for you!”

And how does she feel about that Class of ‘57, with whom she recently celebrated their fiftieth anniversary? She summed up her thoughts: “You had to be impressed.... These are very fine women, who have made wonderful achievements as mothers, as teachers, and in many professional fields. You have to say their four years at St. Catharine’s certainly made a difference in their lives, and you have to be proud of them.” ❖



Dean Ann Grow, Ph.D., at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

Reunion '57: Trailblazers

In the summer of 1953 we all made a decision that would have a lasting impact on our future. We chose to enroll in a new academy at 2250 Williamsbridge Road in the Bronx. Many of us watched it being built; others trusted that it would be ready for our September entry into high school; but we were all pioneers, trailblazers of sorts. We ventured into



(left to right) Sharon McDonald Reilly and Elisa Verna Liotti, Class of 1957 with Sr. Patricia Wolf, RSM '62, SCA President.

something new and different. We shaped this relocated, but new academy as much as it shaped us. Our enthusiasm and innovative spirit were matched by that of a dynamic new principal with a vision of what St. Catharine Academy could become. Together we made that vision a reality.

A half-century has passed since our commencement day, and our lives have been a collection of fascinating stories, all of which have remnants of our years spent at that very special place on Williamsbridge Road. ❖



Frances Rosiello Acampora '57 (left) and Bianca Rosiello Langer '59.



(left to right) Sr. Margaret Brackett (Sr. M. Daniel) and Ann Brady Duggan, former SCA faculty.



(left to right) Mary Costello, RSM '57 with Sr. M. Etheldreda Christie, principal SCA '57 and Sr. Mary Margaret Fitzgerald, RSM, former faculty.



(left) Linda Michetti McLaughlin and Diane Arvay.

Class of 2007--Newest Alumnae

Only 6 months has passed since the Class of 2007 graduated. 15 Catharinites from '07 gathered in the SCA library on January 4 to re-connect before returning to college. These young women, with their hopes and dreams still before them, remember the Class of '07 as "the best"!

(left to right) Cekeyla Joseph '07, Carresse Warren '07 and Britnie Anderson '07



2007 graduates get together at the Young Alumnae Reunion (l to r) Jennifer Timper, Chelsea Shaffer, Marcia Calle, Jamie Somohano, and Carly Villarruel

Class Notes

1951 Margaret A. Friel (Sr. M. Pius RSM) volunteers 4 days a week in the Endoscopy Suite at St. John's Riverside Hospital in Yonkers, NY.



Sr. M. Pius Friel (Margaret Ann Friel) '51

1955 Margaret Kelly Monaghan and her husband Bob will celebrate their 38th wedding anniversary this year. Their 3 children and 3 grandchildren live nearby. Now retired, Margaret and Bob love to travel, and volunteer at their parish church working with its charitable programs. Margaret thanks SCA and the wonderful Sisters who prepared her to succeed by giving her a good education.

Gertrude Graham Novak and family members traveled to Italy recently for a reunion with Patricia Zoli who lives in Rome. Gertrude's sisters, Barbara, Joan and Rita as well as Patricia, are all SCA graduates. They had a wonderful time.

Meg Ruckel has moved back to Yonkers after living a year at The Villa in Peekskill, NY.

1956 Margaret Kelly Murphy earned her BA degree in 1982 from Immaculata University. She has 6 children and 21 grandchildren.

1957 Nora Sharkey Murphy recently had her book, "A Youth Guide to Saint Patrick's Cathedral", published by Editions du Sigse. Nora is also the host of "Nora's Neighbors", a weekly talk show on WVOX-AM in New Rochelle and continues as adjunct professor in the Graduate Department of Art and Communications at The College of New Rochelle.

Sharon McDonald Reilly received the Elizabeth Ann Seton Compassionate Educator Award from the Archdiocese of New York recognizing her 40+ years teaching in archdiocesan elementary schools. Sharon is currently teaching 4th grade at Annunciation School in Crestwood, NY.

Joan Mighorisi Auletta will be married 49 years this year. She and her husband are living in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and would love to hear from other alumnae living in Florida.

Mary Costello, RSM is presently working on her 4th career as Mission Coordinator for Mt. St. Rita's Health Center in Cumberland, Rhode Island. Her memories of SCA are that of a wonderful experience of life, academics, fun and a rootedness in spirituality and mercy.

Mary Hopkins LaValle married her senior prom date and just celebrated their 49th anniversary. They raised a son, five daughters and a niece and have 20 grandchildren. Mary attended college in her 40's and had a 30-year career in finance. Now retired, she and her husband travel, do volunteer work and enjoy their large family. She was delighted to see so many familiar faces at the 50th reunion, especially the six faculty members who attended.

1958 Nancy Scheffer Mian and husband, Louis, celebrated their 42nd wedding anniversary. Their sons Robert and Peter have blessed them with 3 grandchildren; Tyler, 6; Lauren, 5, and Breanna, 1. Nancy is a retired teacher who volunteers as a Eucharistic Minister and a choir member. She also teaches a confirmation class at St. Clare's School. Nancy is currently undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer and asks that you keep her in your prayers.

Marie Wolf Doyle and husband, Jim, celebrated the birth of their 11th grandchild, Hannah May, on July 7, 2007.

1960 Patricia Lynch Moore and her husband, Joe, are enjoying their retirement and spend winters in Florida and the rest of the year in Randolph, NJ. They have five grandchildren and welcomed a 6th grandchild in November 2007.

Mary Ann McPeak Gillespie is president of Local 1809, International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO in New York, NY.

1963 Marsha Lilienthal Baddie says hello to all her classmates.

Judith Wobbekind English and her husband, Tom, reside in Dix Hills, Long Island and are traveling more since Tom's retirement. They are happy to announce their second set of twin grandchildren, Katherine Margaret and Grace Ellen, born on February 21, 2007. They now have 8 grandchildren, 5 boys and 3 girls and are blessed with a wonderful family.

1972 Hanora Carney Sarro and husband Mark celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary this year. They have a son Thomas who is doing well and is a senior at Sacred Heart University and hopes to



Marie Wolf Doyle holding grandchild, Hannah May.

ALUMNAE NEWS

become a teacher. Daughter Caitlin is a senior at Yorktown High School and wants to be an architectural engineer.

Nina Colavolpe-Leone worked in the field of psychiatric nursing for 22 years and is now studying to be a court reporter. Nina is an amateur cabaret singer and performs twice a year with fellow music students at "Don't Tell Mama" in Manhattan, NY. Nina was happy to see so many of her classmates at the 35th class reunion.

1981 Rosa Torres Lifson and her husband, Barry, and children Sarah, 9, Marc, 8 and Noah, 6, have lived in Williamstown, WV for 5 years and really love it. Rosa and her family recently moved into their dream house and feel truly blessed.

1985 Evie Tsolomyhs teaches first grade at St. Thomas Aquinas in the Bronx. She had a great time meeting all her classmates at the recent class reunion, and is looking forward to the next reunion.

1992 Lorraine Mele O'Donnell and her husband Patrick are very excited to announce the birth of their daughter Erin Adour on February 28, 2007.

1995 Christine Costanza McGrath and her husband are the proud parents of Emily Abigail, born on May 11, 2006.

1996 Catherine Grippo is engaged to Thomas Strok and will wed on May 25, 2008.

Kamali Hawthorne graduated in May 2007 from Fordham University obtaining an MBA degree in finance and management with an international business focus.

La-Shanta Forbes graduated Cum Laude in June 2007 from City College of New York earning a Bachelor of Science degree.

2002 Kristina Dabovic is presently attending St. Johns University in New York where she will graduate in May

2008. She will pursue a doctoral fellowship in clinical research in the pharmaceutical industry.

Jennifer Gallardo is currently the Director of Technology and Online Programs for Arts Engine, a media arts non-profit organization.

2004 Manda Dabovic is a 4th year student at the Art Institute of NY and will graduate in June 2008 with a degree in interior design.

2006 Ann Dreslik is attending Long Island University.

Angela Parlo is attending St. John's University.

Gwendolyn Rivera is attending St. John's University, completing her second year.

Melody Salcedo is attending SUNY at Albany, NY.



Britnie Anderson and Tiana Rosa, 2007 alumnae

2007 Gelitza Gutierrez is attending SUNY Delhi and is maintaining a 3.5 GPA.

Morgan Toppin is attending Bowie State College in Maryland.

Carly Villarruel is attending the University of New Haven, majoring in criminal justice/forensic science.

Jamie Somohano is attending Mount Saint Vincent College majoring in communications.

IN MEMORIAM

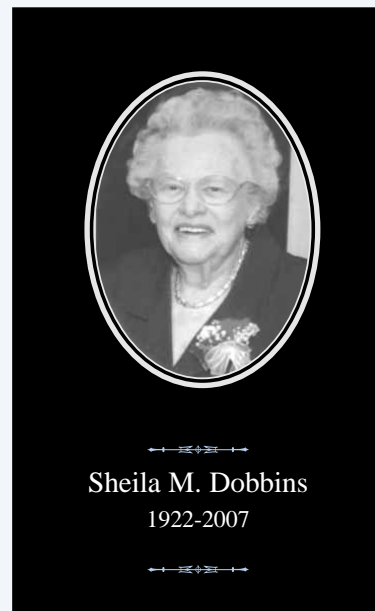
■ Remembering Sheila M. O'Keefe Dobbins '39

SCA alumnae Elizabeth Bradley '49 informed SCA of the death of Sheila M. O'Keefe Dobbins '39. Reflecting on her friend Elizabeth writes: "Sheila was very instrumental in re-activating the SCA alumnae once the school moved to the Bronx. We spent many evenings at meetings there, planning our annual fashion show in the Plaza and also our communion breakfasts". "She was loyal to the Sisters of Mercy and to SCA till the very end, and also a good friend who will be missed by many".

■ In Memoriam

Marie G. Wolf

Mother of Marie W. Doyle '58, Sr. Patricia Wolf '62, Dorothy W. McGlynn '68 and Eileen W. Davey '72



SCA Cheerleader Honored

Scholarship to Shirelle Thomas

Just after Thanksgiving, senior Shirelle Thomas received the Annette Hroncich Westchester County Cheerleading Scholarship, which includes a \$1,600 grant. This is quite an honor as this annual award is based on academic performance, volunteer service, club activity beyond cheerleading, and the ability to successfully manage the competing demands of scholarship, sports, and employment. Shirelle is part of a team which is nationally ranked and which intensively practices four hours a day, four days a week. Players are generally nominated for the award by their coaches. Recently Shirelle discussed the prize, her teammates and reflections on SCA, and her plans for after graduation in June.



According to Shirelle, the greatest lesson learned from participating on a cheerleading squad is discipline and team work. "It's a team sport. People help you reach your goal. It's a hand-to-hand relationship," said Shirelle. Maybe it is

more appropriate to say "hand-to-foot". Shirelle is a "base" and a tumbler. On the team it is one of her jobs to balance another cheerleader in the air by holding her foot. Reflecting on that experience she said, "when she stood on my hands so confidently, that was when I realized the team work, and a bond of trust was built." When Shirelle thinks about discipline, she thinks about time management. In addition to school and sports, she works in a local supermarket.

Shirelle hopes to attend the University of West Georgia planning to become a high school math teacher. She credits SCA's Mrs. Gabrielle Cassaneto, as well as other members of the math department. Of Mrs. Cassaneto she said: "She saw so much potential in me for math, and pushed me to do so much. I love it!" ❖



Shirelle Thomas '08



Save the Date!



Mark your calendars for the upcoming Annual SCA Alumnae Reunion. The reunion will take place on April 27, 2008 for classes ending in '03 and '08. If you are interested in being part of the reunion committee to help with the planning, please contact Cathy Bostley, Database Manager, at 718-882-2882 or cbostley@scahs.org. Specific information will be mailed before the scheduled event.

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St. Catharine Academy
2250 Williamsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10469-04891
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