

Villa CONNECTIONS

VILLA MARIA ACADEMY LOWER SCHOOL | SPRING 2022

Celebrating 150 Years





VILLA MARIA ACADEMY LOWER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Energized by the IHM Charism of love, creative hope, and fidelity, Villa Maria Academy empowers young girls for spiritual and moral development, academic excellence, leadership and service within a Catholic, private learning community.

Dear Alumnae and Friends of Villa Maria Academy,

What an exciting year to publish our annual alumnae magazine as we celebrate Villa Maria Academy's 150 years! This anniversary of our legacy is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the IHM Sisters, lay educators and staff, parents, families, students, friends, and alumnae who uplift our school academically, spiritually, and physically year after year. Our hearts are filled with gratitude to achieve this milestone together.

The story about Villa Maria Academy's origin is impressive when you consider its humble beginnings. Inspired by the Spirit, Father Louis Gillet recognized the need to educate the girls in the rural area of Michigan where he was serving in 1845. It was unlikely a young woman's potential was fully valued at that time—or for that matter, as it remained for a century and more after. This was a progressive mindset for a simple missionary from Belgium who did not have a prominent role in the Catholic Church. With no resources, he asked Sister Theresa Maxis for help. They founded The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a year later, St. Mary's Young Ladies Academy opened its log cabin door. I am sure they never imagined the mission they ignited would become the exceptional educational experience that Villa Maria Academy is today.

We are proud and grateful for your role in the Villa Maria Academy Lower School Legacy. You exemplify what can happen when a young woman's potential is realized and nurtured with the virtues of the IHM Charism: love, creative hope, and fidelity. It is with pride to learn about your confidence to lead and pursue fulfilling goals; your innate motivation to serve others with empathy and care; and your faith and acceptance of God's plan for you.

We hope you will keep in touch and know you are in our prayers always as forever members of our Villa Family.

God bless.

Melissa Z. Kiebert
Director of Mission Advancement



Throughout this magazine, you will see QR codes that are quick links to the villamaria.org website. They are easy to use!

- Open your camera app on your mobile device or handheld tablet.
- Hold it over the QR code.
- Click on the browser window that appears on the top of your screen.

CONFIDENCE PAVED WAY TO FULFILLING A DREAM

JACKIE KRAFT '13


WRITTEN BY MELISSA KIEBORT | PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY JACKIE KRAFT

A career in acting, musical theater, and comedy improv isn't a traditional path for many. It requires resilience and confidence to overcome fear and persistence to do whatever it takes to fulfill a dream driven by a passion. Our alumna, Jackie Kraft exemplifies this determination.

Jackie first became interested in theater, watching her older brothers perform in shows at St. Edmond's during grade school. She felt excitement stir and knew it was something she wanted to do. She became involved with several shows while a student at VMALS, including those put on by Villa and Malvern Prep. At times, it required her to go to back-to-back practices on the same day. While her castmates would be tired afterward, she felt energized. Without a doubt, she knew this was what she wanted to do with her life.

Jackie was a theater arts student at Marymount Manhattan College when she started volunteering at Broadway Bound Kids. It is a nonprofit established in 2004 with a holistic mission to embrace the individuality and inclusion of youth while teaching them the lessons necessary to be in the performing arts. She mentored students in elementary through high school, and six months later, they hired her. She has worked with BBK students for the past four years and recently finished teaching an improv class. "It is endlessly inspiring to see the joy that theatre brings to kids and reminds me why I started doing theatre when I was their age."

Jackie is currently working as a production assistant for an upcoming movie. Additionally, she does monthly shows with her comedy group, Sponsored By, and goes on weekly auditions. Last month, she booked and filmed her first commercial.

Jackie credits her opportunity to serve on VMALS' student council as the school spirit coordinator (she often dressed up and walked around the school as Taffy) with the foundation needed to be in the entertainment industry. "Beginning my journey at Villa, I developed a passion for leadership and service that [provided] me many wonderful experiences throughout high school and college. This training gave me the confidence to know I am capable of anything and is the reason I am where I am today." 



Photographed by Emily Lambert



(Left) Jackie portraying Mary in the Christmas Pageant as an 8th Grade student. (Right) Jackie performing.

"Beginning my journey at Villa, I developed a passion for leadership and service that [provided] me many wonderful experiences throughout high school and college. This training gave me the confidence to know I am capable of anything and is the reason I am where I am today."

VILLA MARIA ACADEMY ALUMNAE TEACHERS AND STAFF

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Sister Julia Ann, IHM

I was blessed to be a part of the Villa Maria Academy Lower School Family for 11 years, from 1974 to 1985! In 1979, the younger grades of Villa Maria Academy Lower School were moved to Immaculata. Under the leadership of Sister Anne Bernard (Sister Margaret Gradl) and with the help of our incredible faculty, the extremely supportive parents, and super great children, there was great excitement as we moved into our new classrooms and transformed the former Postulant wing of the Motherhouse into the Lower School.

Every one of my days at Villa was filled with joy as I worked with the students entrusted to me. Preparing children for the Sacraments and working with Father John Joseph and Abbot Antonucci are special memories. After leaving Villa, I taught in Virginia and Georgia. Then I came back to Pennsylvania and taught in Shenandoah and Havertown. I am grateful to God that I had the privilege of teaching first grade for 48 years and second grade for one year. When I gave up full-time education, I assisted in Learning Support classrooms. Today I help in the Spirituality Center here at the Motherhouse and enjoy being so close to the school that it is the source of many treasured memories for me.

Many thanks to our alumnae for all that you have done and still do to help make Villa Maria such a special place. May God bless you and your families. Know that you are remembered in my prayers.



Sister William Catherine, IHM

I was at Villa from 2007 to 2010 as a second-grade teacher who prepared our girls for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. During that time, I served as the religion coordinator for the primary grades and the Chair of the diocesan Religion Curriculum Committee.

My favorite Villa memories are teaching and having fun with the girls and, of course, celebrating the Sacraments. In addition, I enjoyed getting to know my students and their families and doing things with some of them. I also remember how fascinated the second graders were that I had a mom who came to my classroom and helped me.

When I was transferred from Villa, I was so sad. I loved being a part of the Villa Family. I taught at St. Lawrence School and Pope John Paul, and then I gave service at Camilla for seven years. I oversaw our chapel, and all that goes with that, I worked in the pharmacy, and I studied to get a Pastoral Care Certificate. When I left Camilla in 2019, I studied at St. Mary Medical Center to become a Chaplain, and I lived in Glenside. After only one year of study, the community asked me to become the Director of Pastoral Care at St. Martha's Manor. I have worked here for 1 ½ years, and I love it! I live at St.



Joseph's Convent in Downingtown and walk to work each day. We have 200 residents, and I've gotten close to many of them and their families.

There is not a day that I don't think about my former Villa students and pray for them.

Mrs. Kristen Luzi Delaney

I loved Villa Maria High School so much that when I saw a 4th grade opening at the Lower School, I accepted the position because I loved the environment and culture of the school. I could tell by walking the halls that I believed in their mission and would fit right in. It was evident that the staff was hardworking, and the focus was on helping the students become lifelong learners. I appreciated the emphasis on professional development for the staff so we could have the skills needed to teach the young women of VMA best. During my time at Villa, from 2008 to 2010, I learned a tremendous amount while teaching at Villa.

While at Villa, I enjoyed an active role in many activities, however, my favorite memories from Villa Maria were the wonderful times and relationships I built with my students in 4B and my hardworking and fun colleagues. I still miss them so much after leaving.

Since leaving Villa, I have been teaching at Bywood Elementary School in Upper Darby. I am an EL (English Learner) Specialist, working with students with a first language other than English. I am married to my amazing husband, Sean Delaney, and we have two pre-school-aged sons, Connor and Ryan, who keep us very busy!

I encourage our alumnae to use the gifts and values you have been taught at Villa to get what they want out of life. Work hard, play hard and help others.



Mrs. Barbara McDermott

My sister, Therese, who was teaching at St. Aloysius Academy, informed me that Villa Maria was seeking a new second-grade teacher. Excited by this new opportunity to teach at a prestigious school like Villa, I applied. I joined Villa's faculty in the fall of 1997 and taught the second grade and



their Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist until the Spring of 2013, when I retired. I returned to Villa as a substitute teacher for all levels from pre-K to 8th for another eight years.

Since leaving Villa, I have been busy with my grandchildren, traveling to Ireland, and visiting National Parks. I help at the West Chester Food Bank, teach CCD at my parish, and am currently volunteering at the IHM Literacy Center.

I miss you all! I know that you received a strong foundation at Villa, which opened a world of possibilities! Over the years, I have loved hearing about your many accomplishments.

I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to touch so many lives. I wish you all a blessed, healthy, and happy life. You remain as always in my thoughts and prayers with love.

Sister Anita Patrick, IHM

I had the joy of teaching first grade at Villa Maria Academy from 1985 to 1989. I left Villa to become principal of Our Lady of Ransom, Philadelphia, and then principal of St. Ephrem, Bensalem. After I had the privilege of serving as Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools in the Diocese of Allentown for 16 years. I believe that all my experiences in education and, very strongly, Villa helped me in this work.

My fondest memories include the loving support of the parents, the eagerness of the girls to learn, the opportunity to try new methods of education, and the close spirit among the dedicated faculty. There were also so many activities and spirit-filled opportunities, from putting on the first grade plays to the Family Masses. However, the most precious memory is preparing the students for the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and First Eucharist. The sincerity of the students and their parents and the beauty of the ceremonies were a joy to behold.

The students who attended Villa were blessed with a strong Catholic education. May you continue to grow and share your love for your faith, your gift of leadership, and your goodness and generosity to all you encounter. Keep close to God, your family, and Villa Maria Academy. God Bless!



Mrs. Jennifer Devine Richardson

Villa is a special place. I taught fourth grade for seven years, from 2010 to 2017. One of my favorite memories is teaching the history of Pennsylvania to my fourth-grade students through project-based learning. I was lucky to teach some wonderful groups of girls over the years, and I am always excited to see what they are doing in high school and beyond.

Since leaving Villa Maria, I have entered the business world, and I have been working for Universal Health Services, Inc. since 2019. I am currently working in the Human Resources Department in Recruitment. I also married my wonderful husband, Keith, in September 2020 and we adopted a mini Goldendoodle named Riley in the fall of 2021. She is a cutie!



I want to say a special hello to all of my former students. I hope you are all doing well! You have bright futures ahead!

Sister Mary Ellen Tennity, IHM

After several teaching assignments I was assigned to Villa Maria Academy to teach Grade 8 from 1988 to 1992.

I had the delightful once-in-a-lifetime experience to return to Villa Maria as the principal in 2003. I served until 2012.



As a teacher, I loved working with the students and seeing them grow into mature young women. My colleagues were so dedicated, and they helped me better understand the IHM Charism. Villa Maria has such an illustrative history. It was the first school opened by the Sisters, and my lay colleagues had a profound reverence for their part in the IHM Story. Villa is a prime example of being firmly grounded in the sense of tradition and ritual while at the same time being at the forefront of educational excellence. I particularly enjoyed planning the annual Mission Day with my students.

As a principal, the teachers and the staff influenced me by their generous commitment to the students. The Villa teachers and staff were always there for girls. Nothing was too much to ask. I particularly enjoyed working with the students in developing their leadership capacity. Many of the Villa graduates hold leadership positions in their walk of life. It is fascinating to see how their years at Villa Maria prepared them for their future careers. I remember the experience of choosing the first school mascot, Taffy. The girls spent a considerable amount of time researching why a giraffe would be a choice for the mascot. Their decision was so intentional. They were able to make meaning for the younger students. Isn't that what leadership is all about: making meaning for others.

In 2012 I was elected to the General Council of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. My primary responsibility was to coordinate the work of the Congregation in the area of Elementary Education. Since 2018, I have had the privilege to serve as the General Superior of The Sisters.

Our world and our Church need young people who understand the power of their influence. A Villa Maria education is instrumental in empowering young women to truly understand the importance of how they can make a difference in the lives of others.

FAITH OVER FEAR

A HOPEFUL SEARCH FOR A KIDNEY DONOR

WRITTEN AND PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY KIM SPADA '94

I attended Lower Villa from third through eighth grade. These were happy years filled with cherished memories – among them, getting to play Joseph in the drama club's production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, participating in the Art After School program, Mission Day, and May Procession. I had incredible teachers who nurtured my talents, and I forged lifelong friendships. Along with my parents, Villa provided me with a foundation that would allow me to navigate life effectively. As an adult, I can now fully appreciate my years at Villa and what they meant for me. In addition to a top-notch education, Villa instilled invaluable principles such as compassion and kindness, respecting others, confidence, showing gratitude, and having a positive attitude. But most importantly, it's where I learned about faith—faith in myself and trust in God and His plan for me. As an adult, that faith would be put to the test.



I urge anyone who wants to learn more about living donation or support my cause with a sign or magnet, to reach out to me through my Bee Positive Facebook page or at BeePositive4Kim@gmail.com.

After Lower Villa, I moved on to Villa Mary Academy High School and then to Villanova University, where I received my degree in Business Administration. Most of my professional career has been in health insurance and employee benefits. I briefly dabbled in real estate and new construction sales until I ultimately realized my true place was in the employee benefits industry. I was thrilled when Villa invited me to speak at their career day in the spring of 2019. Part of my message to the girls that day was that you don't always have to take the straight path when it comes to your career. There are twists and turns but take advantage of new opportunities and experiences. Ultimately, you'll end up where you need to be.

Like my career, my personal life has also been filled with twists and turns. The biggest twist came in 2007. I had recently visited a new doctor who discovered my creatinine was high, and he referred me to a nephrologist. At the time, I did not know what creatinine was. Simply put, it is a measure of kidney function. I was soon caught in a whirlwind of tests and ultrasounds, countless rounds of lab work, biopsies, and second and third opinions, and was eventually diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). My kidneys showed significant scar tissue, but the cause has been a mystery. At 42, my kidney function is less than 10%, and I am preparing for a transplant. While



Kim's beloved Walter on signs promoting her search for a donor.

I patiently wait for a donor, daily dialysis keeps me alive. I chose Peritoneal Dialysis (PD), which can be done in the comfort of my home while I sleep each night. It allows me to lead a somewhat normal life. I continue to work each day, and I still get to do most of the things I love with the people I love.

Now, the search is on for a living donor. Relying on the transplant list means I could be waiting 5-7 years for a kidney. My sister immediately stepped up without hesitation to donate. After learning that she nor any other immediate family member was a viable option, my doctors urged me to spread the word. So, I launched my Facebook page, **Bee Positive-Finding a Kidney for Kim**, in September 2021. I have a dear friend to thank for the inspiration behind the name. It represents not only my positive attitude but also my B+ blood type. I also began a small marketing campaign with yard signs featuring my adorable mini goldendoodle, Walter, and car magnets to promote my cause. The support has been overwhelming, and I am grateful.

There are currently 100,000 people on the waiting list for a deceased donor kidney just like me. Sadly, most people don't know much about living donations, and I want to change that. Not just for me but for the thousands of others who are patiently waiting. Most of us are born with two kidneys, but we only need one, and you can successfully share your spare and continue to lead a long, healthy life.

While my attitude is one of positivity and strength now, I must admit that initially, I was overwhelmed and frightened. I was also a bit angry that this was happening to me. I momentarily sat with fear and anger before remembering that God had a plan for me. And then I decided to choose faith over fear, knowing that He would guide me through this safely. I have Villa to thank for this faith and providing me with the foundation and life skills to get through this with grace, grit, and determination. 🐝



GRADUATION



MAY PROCESSION



MISSION DAY



PASSING OF THE LIGHT

THEN & NOW



VILLA STILL UPHOLDS THE SAME TRADITIONS
THAT CREATED CHERISHED MEMORIES FOR OUR ALUMNAE



BIG SISTER/LITTLE SISTER



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



FAMILY MASS AND PICNIC

A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS AND FRIENDSHIPS

SERVICE BY FINDING SOLUTIONS

WRITTEN AND PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY ALEXANDRA MORRIS SALEH '05




"I believe that my time at Villa is the secret to my success. Being in Villa's fostering environment, I learned and grew the soft skills necessary to be a successful leader."



Alexandra with her Villa Bridesmaids: Ashley Lewis, Sara Thompson, Jackie Tobia, Emily Murta

Hello, Villa Alumnae! It's great to be speaking (or should I say writing) with you again. When my Villa Lifer (VMAHS '09) days were over, I continued my education at Drexel University. I graduated in 2013 with a degree in Business and a minor in Public Relations. I guess you can say a few things have changed since I was roaming the halls of Villa Maria Academy. For example, I got a little taller, I'm now a little wiser, and oh yeah, I got married this past September! I am fortunate to have lifelong friendships that I created while at Villa. Four of my bridesmaids at my wedding were fellow Villa Alumnae. My husband and I live in Philadelphia with our 2-year-old Sheepadoodle, Rosy. We love spending time outside, exploring new restaurants, seeing our family and friends, and traveling the world. We ended 2021 by spending November and December overseas in Dubai.

Over the past 12 years, I have been building my career in Supply Chain Management with several large retailers, including Estee Lauder, Nordstrom, Sephora and Macy's and eventually Campbell Soup. After working for two big fortune 500 companies, I decided it was time to switch to consulting. I love that I am now working with leading organizations to develop solutions that affect people around the world and find new and alternative ways to solve supply chain bottlenecks. I also take pride in knowing that my work with pharmaceutical clients is helping millions of people worldwide receive their prescription medicines safely and efficiently. Supply chain organizations have been in the hot seat this past year, so it has been an amazing opportunity to learn how to build resilient supply chains and develop solutions that our clients are eager and ready to implement. What I love most about my job is being a mentor and leader to younger women interested in learning more about a career in the supply chain field and the various opportunities. I have made my career journey my own, and that is one thing that I enjoy. I had never said no to a chance to learn and grow, even when it was in an area outside my comfort level.

I believe that my time at Villa is the secret to my success. Being in Villa's fostering environment, I learned and grew the soft skills necessary to be a successful leader. I took away from Villa that you can accomplish anything if you have a strong network of supportive women behind you. Seeing Villa's secure and successful women leaders was inspirational, motivational, and encouraging. I also learned that you should never be afraid to ask for help when needed. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness but a sign of strength that you can recognize your weakness and improve on it. I will forever be grateful for not only the life lessons that Villa taught me but for the foundation and support the Villa community has continued to provide me through all of life's ups and downs. 

CURRENT SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT COLLECTION FOR UKRAINE

The Middle School hosted a collection drive for Ukraine this spring. They raised funds for the Catholic Relief Services supporting Ukraine and partnered with the Ukrainian National Women's League of America to gather much needed items. Donors received sunflower pins made by the middle school girls.



MOTHER-DAUGHTER SERVICE DAY

The Parent Guild organized a Mother-Daughter Service Day to prepare Easter Baskets for those in need throughout Chester County with Partners in Outreach. The service project was followed by Mass in Sacred Heart Chapel.



THANK YOU!

YOUR GIFTS ASSURE THE CONTINUATION OF A LEGACY

We are blessed by our faithful benefactors who generously support the empowerment of young women by making an enhanced Villa Maria Academy educational experience possible.

ALUMNAE PARTICIPATION IN ANY AMOUNT MAKES AN IMPACT ON THIS MISSION.

The Fund for Villa Maria Academy Lower School is an annual opportunity to ensure the legacy continues by providing:

- Technology resources used as progressive learning tools;
- Teacher ongoing professional development and advanced degree tuition;
- Enriched curriculum;
- Maintaining the vibrancy of our beautiful campus, facilities and buildings.



MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY | [VILLAMARIA.ORG/SUPPORT-VMA](https://villamaria.org/support-vma)



Become an Alumnae Legacy Benefactor

**Bestow a gift of
\$150 to commemorate
the 150 years of
Villa Maria Academy.**





1876



150TH ANNIVERSARY OF

CELEBRATING A 150 YEAR HISTORY: INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT,
ENERGIZED BY THE CHARISM, DEDICATED TO THE MISSION

18
45

Father Louis Gillet, with the help of Sister Theresa Maxis, establishes the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants and the Immaculate Heart of Mary with the intention of educating young girls.

18
46

Their vision of a school for young girls is fulfilled with the opening of the St. Mary's Young Ladies Academy in Monroe, Michigan. The school is in a log cabin with 40 enrolled students. ▲

18
72

IHM Sisters purchase the former Military Academy in West Chester, and the Academy of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is transferred with the Motherhouse to this location. The Academy experiences growth in enrollment and prestige among other educational institutions in the area. ▲

18
76

The Academy of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is renamed Villa Maria Academy. ▲

19
14

The Sisters, under the leadership of Mother Camilla, establish a Catholic college for women, which is now Immaculata University. Before the college opens, this newly purchased site becomes the new home for the Academy. ▲

19
25

The Academy gradually moves to Green Tree located on Lincoln Highway. It is the current location of Villa Maria Academy High School. ▲

19
79

The increased number of high school students prompts the need for grades 1-8 to relocate back to the Motherhouse in the Postulate wing. Principal Sister Margaret Gradl (Sister Anne Bernard) oversees the renovations and the move into our current building and campus. The first day at the new Villa Maria Academy Lower School is September 5th with an enrollment of 237 students from K-8th grades. ▲

19
80

Villa Maria Academy has its first Middle States Evaluation. Since this date, Villa Maria Academy continues to successfully achieve Middle States Accreditation on a 7-year cycle. ▲



VILLA MARIA ACADEMY

19
87

Under the leadership of Principal Sister Dennis Maureen, Villa Maria earns the NCEA School of Excellence Award.

19
88

After the completion of a capital campaign, renovations are made to the second floor of the school building to create 12 classrooms, 4 offices, and a multimedia room.

20
05

The first floor of the academy is renovated to transform two smaller parlors into a large main office space.

20
08

Under the leadership of Sister Mary Ellen Tennity, a capital campaign – *Building on Traditions, Today, Tomorrow, Together* - is initiated to fund the construction of a Transportation Center on the east side of the campus, a new access road, and the leveling of the athletic fields. ▲

20
12

Villa purchases a modular building, the Early Learning Center (ELC) to house a preschool and PreK program. The unit is placed in the playground with newly purchased equipment and opens in September. ▲

20
16

VMALS formally adds a STEM curriculum. All students receive exposure to STEM concepts and experiences from creating spaghetti structures in kindergarten to building and programming robots in 8th grade. The same year, Villa constructs a parking lot on the west side of the Academy. ▲

20
17

The Academy's library is renovated with a more modern design and becomes a learning commons for students. ▲

20
21

Villa purchases another ELC modular building to house two classrooms of PreK students. It opens in October and welcomes 24 PreK students. ▲

20
22

Villa Maria Academy celebrates its 150th Anniversary. ▲

2021

Jacqueline Aleardi attends VMAHS. She is a member of the JV field hockey team, a ninth grade ambassador, and the elected class president at Villa Maria Academy High School. She coordinated a school wide donation drive and dress down day for Connect Through Cancer.



Sophia Gueriera is loving being a first-year student at Villa Maria Academy High School.

2020

Kimberly Adam won first place in the regional Schmidt Vocal Competition in Pennsylvania held at Temple University. Kim won a trophy and a cash prize of \$2,500. She also received two medals: one for becoming a finalist, and one for being named the most promising sophomore. She will compete in Nationals this June.



Callen Todd was named to the All-Main Line Field Hockey team – honorable mention and the Daily Local News All-Area Field Hockey Team – honorable mention.

Josephine Michel '20, Natalie Young '19, Jordi DeJong '19, and Vanessa Manning '18 are members of the Madrigals who performed for the dedication of the IHM 175th anniversary vocation education program.



2018

Leila Astofi was named the Main Line Student of the Week in November for her academic achievements, leadership positions that include class vice president and current student body executive vice president and Student Advisory Board throughout her high school. She was awarded the Field Hockey Spirit Award twice, serving as team captain her junior year.



Delaney Dobra was named to the All-Main Line Soccer Team – honorable mention.

Olivia Fries was the Main Line Student of the Week in October.

Ryan Hickey earned the honor of All-Main Line Field Hockey team (2nd team) and the Daily Local News All-Area Field Hockey Team as an honorable mention. She has committed to playing field hockey next year at Drexel University.

Joey Gaglioti was named Main Line Student of the Week in January for her many achievements and positions held at VMAHS. Her capstone project consisted of learning about the crucial ways language and culture are an aspect of international business, as she hopes to study International Business in the future and become bilingual.

Christina Janowicz is the valedictorian for the Class of 2022 at Villa Maria Academy High School. She was named Commended Student in the National Merit Corporation's annual scholarship competition.



Action News stopped by VMAHS to see Villa Maria volleyball senior, **Skylar Kelly** face off against her sister, Ava, a senior at Notre Dame. They played the same position and wore the same number. The girls are triplets and their sister, Christina, will attend College of Charleston after she graduates from Mount Joseph Academy. Ava will attend High Point and Skylar will play beach volleyball at Mercer University.



Kyle Krumenacker and **Amanda Seneca** were named to the All-Main Line Girls Tennis team second team-singles, second singles and honorable mention – singles – third singles.

Annie Shaw committed to play for American University's field hockey team next year.



Makenna Walko '19 is a junior serving as class president at the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr. She is a Feature Editor for the Baldwin newspaper, The Hourglass and junior head of her school's Mock Trial team. This summer, Makenna represented The Baldwin School in the Germination Project Summer Boot Camp. The program this year emphasized medical innovation and gave students the opportunity to interact with globally recognized researchers and thought leaders from Penn Medicine. The bootcamp culminated in a simulation where students acted as bio fund managers attempting to secure \$1 billion in funding for emerging Penn biotech. By collaborating with the thirteen other fellows from the Philadelphia region and connecting with leaders from the city, Makenna gained a deeper appreciation for the social, medical, and political significance of Philadelphia and was inspired to envision a brighter future for its residents.

These VMALS Alumnae earned the honor of being part of the 2021 NFHCA High School National Academic Squad (Scholars of Distinction)

Ryan Hickey '18
Charlotte Powers '19
Annie Shaw '18

2017

Izzy Gochtovtt attends Texas Christian University and is majoring in criminal justice. She planned to try out for their D1 equestrian team, a sport she has participated in since her days at Villa.



2016

Jackie Murray of the Immaculata women's lacrosse earned Weekly Honor Roll honors as the Atlantic East Conference. She is one of the team's high scorers.



Maggie Powers and her Northwestern University Wildcats Field Hockey Team won the NCAA Division 1 Field Hockey National Championship. She becomes a part of history as this represents the program's first National Championship.



Giovanna Rufo is currently in nursing school with a goal of becoming a medical esthetician and owning a med spa. In addition to being a student, she runs a business as a lash and brow technician.



In Her Own Words: Christina DiLoreto '93

About 8 years ago I learned how to sail. I bought my first sailboat two years ago and race it regularly in Jacksonville, FL. I am a founding member of the Jacksonville Sailing Festival. JSF is a community-wide regatta to connect collegiate sailors with local sailors. We have fabulous young adults coming to Jacksonville for their college education. Our goal with this event is to establish connections between sailors (young and old) to help these young folks find employment in Jacksonville after graduation. I am a dietitian and certified diabetes educator working in biotech. Over the last 10 years I have worked with multiple products that improve clinical outcomes and improve quality of life for people with diabetes.



Grace Youakim is finishing her sophomore year at Eastern University. She is president of the school's Habitat for Humanity program and planning to become a teacher after college.

2015

Katie Dow is a student at Temple University studying Psychology and Neuroscience where she is working in a neuroscience lab as an undergraduate.

2014

Ryan Doran is a senior at Catholic University and studying nursing. She is a member of the CUA Cardinals Field Hockey Team and has interned in the Neurology Step Down Unit at MedStar Hospital.



Sydney Reid and Julianna Baptista were dance partners at 2022 Penn State's THON dance marathon. These classmates and friends have been dancers together for many years. Alaina '18 and Silvia '19 Baptista cheered on their big sister at the event.



2013

Kiley Atkins graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Arts in May 2021. She double majored in Political Science and Peace Studies. She is working as a Clinical Research Assistant for the Center for Applied Genomics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

2012

Madison Leiman continued her education since undergrad at Syracuse University to get a Masters in Bioengineering. She is a Field Service Technician for Stryker in New York City and grateful and excited to be working in this field to better healthcare with our customers every day.

2011

Allison Bozzi graduated from John Cabot University with a BA in Political Science and Communications. She is working at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome, Italy in the Mountain Partnership Secretariat.

Dana Ratner graduated from Dickinson College with a BS in Chemistry and currently resides in Philadelphia and is employed at Johnson & Johnson as a scientist.

2010

Erin O'Keefe graduated from VMAHS and Boston College with a bachelor's degree. She is a Senior Associate at KPMG in New York City.

2006

Lauren Riegel Carroll and her husband, Shane, welcomed their baby girl, Reagan Grace to the world on September 16, 2021 who may have a Villa uniform in her future! She has a degree from Penn State University in Industrial Engineering.



2003

Natalie Burke Kaer married her husband, Nicholas on NYE, 2020. They celebrated with a large reception in November 2021. After graduating from VMAHS, Natalie earned a bachelor's degree in Community Health Education from the University of Scranton and maintains a certificate as a Health Education Specialist. She currently is an intern Fertility Care Practitioner with the Saint Paul VI Institute.



2002

Audrey Innella Shiomichil is a behavioral scientist for Indeed. She married in June of 2015 and has a 1-year-old daughter (Neve) and 3-year-old (Layla). Her family recently relocated to Richmond, VA where she and her husband, Matt, loved the area when they attended the University of Richmond.

2001

Lindsay Chadzak Bowman has a Bachelor's degree in IT from Immaculata University. She married her husband, Andrew in 2012 and they have a 12-year old soft coated Wheaton terrier. She is a Systems Engineer at Lockheed Martin.

1997

Allison DelCollo Matthews lives in Wake Forest, NC with her husband, Mike, and sons, Tyler (9) and Greyson (4). She graduated from Elon University with a BS in Accounting and a master's in accounting from NC State. She has worked for Deloitte since 2006 and is in a tax technology practice where she assists national corporations undergoing finance transformations and provides tax guidance.



Katie Berkes McKeeta is a 2nd grade teacher in the West Chester School District and has been happily teaching since 2006. After traveling extensively with her husband, Jeff, a talented photographer, they now are living in the area with their two beautiful daughters, Kenzie (5) and Bryce (2).



1986

Stephanie Nolan Deviney lives in Glenmoore with her husband, Jimmy, and their son, Seamus, a junior at Malvern Prep. She is an attorney for Fox Rothschild LLP in Exton. She loves keeping in touch with her Villa Friends and has so many great memories!

1981

Moira Mulcahy Coyle is a "Villa Lifer" and graduated from Loyola University Maryland with a BA in English Lit and St. Joseph's University with a master's in education. She is married with 5 children and works as a homemaker for her family residing in West Chester.

1977

Susan O'Neill Kennedy graduated from Georgetown University with a BSN. Her family celebrated a wedding in September, a graduation from Notre Dame Law School, and her first grandson.



1976

Teresa Tobia Massimini has been married for 35+ years. She was a corporate recruiting assistant and now works in cardiology with the Lankenau Heart Group.



What has been your life path since graduating from Villa Maria Academy Lower School?

Share your story and add any milestones as a way to keep our alumnae connected and your contact information up-to-date. Use the QR code to link to this form on the VMALS website or visit villamaria.org/alumnae-update.

SAVE THE DATES

PASSING OF THE LIGHT

Monday, June 6, 2022 | 1:30 pm

Motherhouse Chapel

We welcome back our alumnae to hand out pins to the graduating 8th grade girls during this traditional ceremony.

VILLA FAMILY MASS & PICNIC

Sunday, September 25, 2022 | 11 am

Motherhouse Chapel and Lower School

An Alumnae Homecoming opportunity to join us for this traditional event with Mass followed by family fun and food trucks. Gather and enjoy alumnae games and activities. Look for updates and how to order your alumna t-shirts. Updates will be posted on social media and by mail and email this summer.

ALUMNAE CONNECTIONS

We value our ongoing relationships with our alumnae. Here are a few ways you can maintain your connections with your classmates and Villa Maria Academy.

SHARE A LIFE UPDATE AND RECENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Submit a quick life update and let us know your life path since leaving the Lower School. Click on the QR code or visit villamaria.org/alumnae-update.



JOIN THE ALUMNAE FACEBOOK GROUP

Become a member of *Villa Maria Academy Lower School Alumnae Connections* on Facebook.

FOLLOW OUR NEW INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT @VMALSALUMNAE

Contact the Advancement Office if you would like to do an **alumna Instagram takeover!**

ALUMNAE EVENTS

Keep in the know about new events for our VMALS Alumnae by updating your current contact information.

PROMOTE YOUR GET-TOGETHERS

Share plans of your reunions with classmates by posting on our alumnae social media channels and contacting the Advancement Office for assistance.

BECOME INVOLVED

There are many ways you can become involved in our alumnae activities and support VMA efforts. Learn more on villamaria.org and click on "Alumnae"

CONTACT OUR ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Melissa Kiebort
Director of Mission Advancement
mkiebort@villamaria.org
610-644-4864, ext. 106
Villa Maria Academy Lower School
280 IHM Drive, Malvern, PA 19355





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Parents of Alumnae: If this issue is addressed to your daughter who no longer maintains a permanent residence in your home, please email her new address to mkiebort@villamaria.org, or call Melissa Kiebort at 610.644.4864, or see the "Alumnae Connections" section in this issue.



WELCOMING HOME ALUMNAE TO
CELEBRATE 150 YEARS

Save the Date

FAMILY MASS & PICNIC
SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON.