

Beginning to Soar...



**SISTERS
ACADEMY**

of **BALTIMORE**

ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

Letter from the President & Board Chair

Dear Friends,

Day by day, good teachers lead their students to the edge. In spite of the students' claims that the precipice is too steep, too high, or too rough, teachers invite their students to take one more step. Only in taking that step off the edge will the students discover that they can fly and they can soar.

During the past year, our students stepped into new worlds of knowledge, skill, behavior, and experience. They made significant academic progress in mathematics, science, social studies, and reading as measured on standardized tests. Field trips broadened their experience. Student activities provided opportunities for leadership and creativity. Service helped them become more aware of the needs of others in our city. Hosting school visitors helped the students develop social skills and share their accomplishments with our guests.

Through your generosity, we increased the level of services to our students through the addition of our Life Skills teacher who also serves as the school counselor. We increased the hours of our Director of Graduate Support to full time. New volunteers and partnerships provided additional services for our students.

Faced with a slow economy, we held our budget steady with a slight increase of 2% over the previous year. We are happy to report that we met our financial goals. We increased the number of scholarship sponsors, added a new class sponsor, increased annual giving, and began to plan for our major fundraising event "Are You Smarter Than a 6th Grader?"

Our Board of Directors provided dedicated leadership throughout the year through their gifts of time and expertise. They continue to guide Sisters Academy as our students reach new heights.

Thank you for being generous partners as we help our students soar.

Sincerely,

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND
President

Christine A. Lay

Christine A. Lay
Chair of the Board of Directors

Beginning To Soar....

Sisters Academy of Baltimore is steadily lifting middle school girls to new heights of confidence and success. With a safe learning environment, a challenging curriculum, daily enrichment activities, one-on-one support, and a climate of peace and respect, Sisters Academy inspires young adolescent girls. Our students discover that achieving one goal is just the beginning. When they reach for the next level of knowledge or skill, they find their wings. These girls are rising toward a bright and fulfilling future.

Striving to be their best means learning to solve algebra problems and to write a cogent essay, but it also means learning to eat healthy foods and to swim. It means learning acceptable ways to express anger and learning which plants grow best on the sunny side of the garden. It means learning how to use a digital camera, to sculpt with clay, or to sing a song in Spanish. Perhaps most importantly, it means learning to be a good "big sister" to a younger student and learning to speak up when someone is in trouble.

Sisters Academy teachers, staff, volunteers, and parents delight in our students' progress. It is wonderful to see 8th graders plan, cook, and serve a three-course harvest luncheon for the entire school. It is exciting when 5th graders organize a charity drive for the victims of hurricanes in Texas and Haiti. And, it is worth some extra driving when 7th graders do so well participating in summer programs off-campus – like art classes at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and "Media and Communications Camp" at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland.

Sisters Academy is the launching pad for girls who are curious and willing to stretch themselves. Our graduates enter high school and just keep flying higher. The Academy continues to support and encourage these young women as they take advantage of new opportunities for growth. We look forward to seeing how far our former students can go.



The Year 2009-2010 in Review

Some Facts About Our Students

- ★ Sisters Academy of Baltimore enrolled a total of 68 students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of our students' families qualified for the federal free or reduced meals program.
- ★ All 20 students who entered the 5th grade in September 2009 (Class of 2013) were from 15 different Baltimore City public schools.
- ★ Each student spent 9.5 hours per day in school. This was 32% more time than they would have spent in public school. Our attendance rate was 95%.
- ★ From the 5th to the 8th grade, students in the Class of 2010 increased their average percentile rank in mathematics by 17 points, from the 53rd to the 70th percentile. In science, they increased by 18 percentile points, from the 42nd to the 60th percentile.

Some Facts About Our Program

- ★ On June 2, 2010, our eighth graders graduated on the campus of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. These fourteen girls are attending the following schools: Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Catonsville High School, Institute of Notre Dame, Lansdowne High School, Maryvale Preparatory School, Notre Dame Preparatory School, Roland Park Country School, St. Paul's School for Girls, and The Seton Keough High School.
- ★ Sisters Academy employed eight full-time teachers and seven part-time teachers. Five of the faculty and staff were members of our sponsoring religious communities.
- ★ College of Notre Dame of Maryland and Sisters Academy of Baltimore initiated a three-year partnership through a grant from the Maryland Campus Compact. To begin this project, Americorps Vista volunteer Hilry Hazelwood brought six college students to tutor Sisters Academy students on a weekly basis.
- ★ Members of the Class of 2011 participated in summer learning beyond the campus. They studied at Notre Dame Preparatory School, American Visionary Art Museum, Bucknell University, Towson University, Maryvale Preparatory School, University of Maryland College Park, and the Downtown Sailing Club.
- ★ Through our Sisters of Bon Secours Ministry grant, Sisters Academy improved its program in health and physical development. In our Life Skills class, students demonstrated an increase in knowledge about good nutrition and the components of a healthy diet. In Physical Education class, their fitness level improved – particularly in the areas of flexibility and cardiovascular ability.

The Students' View

In May of 2010, the girls at Sisters Academy celebrated national "I Can Day" by taking note of the things they had learned to do since September of 2009. Here's a partial list:

Fifth Grade Students

I CAN.....write in cursive and play chess.
multiply and divide fractions.
play volleyball, draw a face.
be creative and do anything if I put my mind to it.
knit a whole project with different colors.
settle my problems easily, use a protractor.

Sixth Grade Students

I CAN....be more mature, get ready faster.
focus better in my classes, write a good report.
be more of a leader.
talk to others respectfully when things are bad.
do a forward roll and get an "A" in math.
be more patient and loving to all my family.

Seventh Grade Students

I CAN....draw a pretty flower.
write a business letter.
find the area of a missing geometry shape or figure.
bisect angles in math class.
read a book with 350 pages in it.
apply concepts to solve word problems.
get good grades in French and speak it a little.

Eighth Grade Students

I CAN....create a yearbook.
multiply binomials and trinomials.
write a research paper.
be myself without having to change for anybody.
do anything I put my mind to.
give people advice.
get people to look at me as a peaceful person.



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Sisters Academy is grateful to the following individuals, religious communities, businesses, and foundations who have chosen to make a multi-year commitment to sponsor a student for four years.

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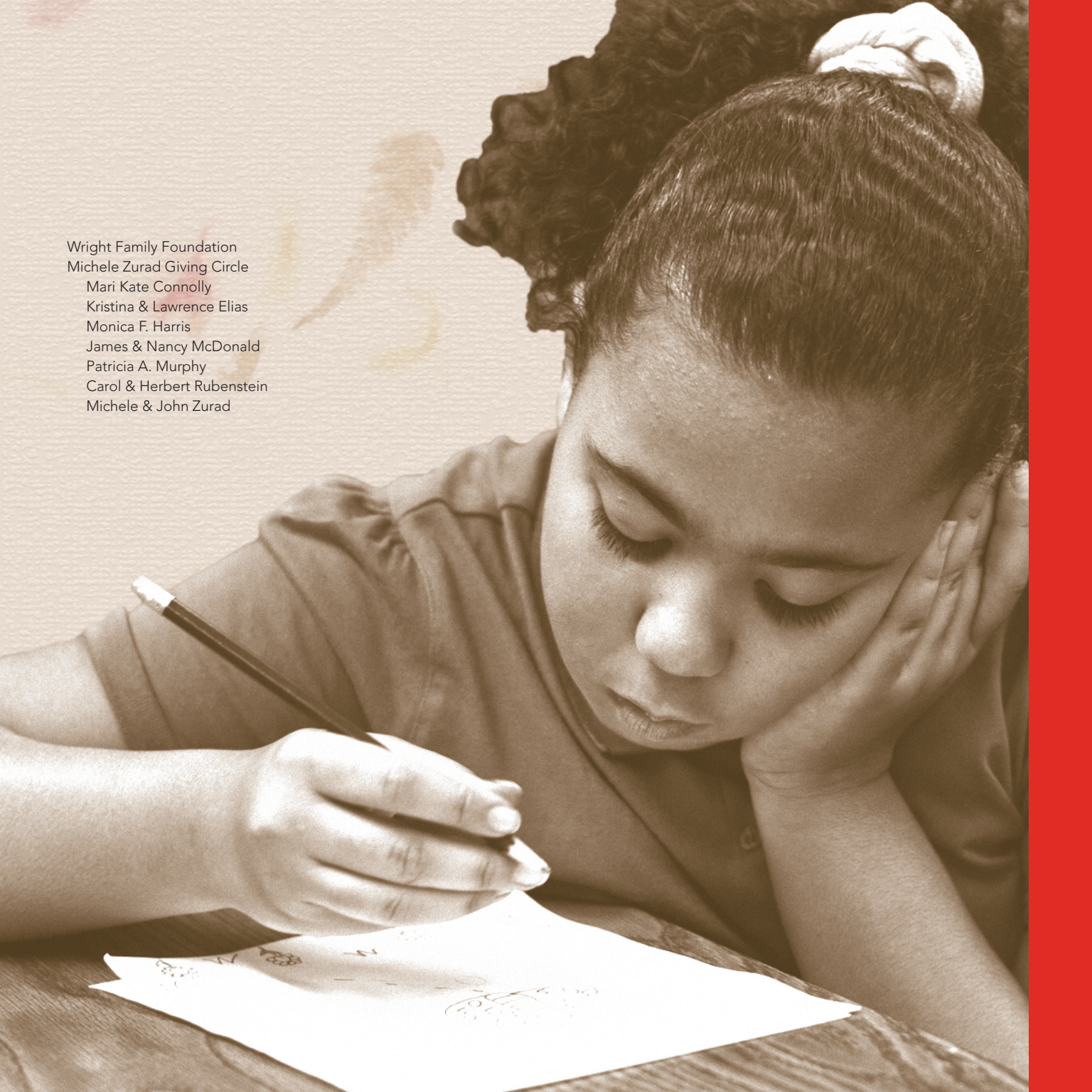
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"Refuse to be average. Let your heart soar as high as it will."

~ Aiden Wilson Tozer

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"The wings that Sisters Academy provides for students will last throughout their lives. This powerful process that the students make a reality is exciting to watch."

~ Barry Nestor, Volunteer

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"People who soar are those who refuse to sit back, sigh and wish things would change."

~Charles Swindoll

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"Flying might not be all plain sailing, but the fun of it is worth the price."

~Amelia Earhart

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"One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar."

~ Helen Keller

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*"It's time for us to discover the secrets of the stars, to sail to an uncharted land,
to open up a new heaven where our spirits can soar."*

~ Sarah Ban Breathnach

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We need you now more than ever. And thank you, so much."*

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"Flying free is doing what I want to do, even if it's different from what everybody expects me to do. It's when I win the battle between me and the people who thought I should go down this road and I find my own road."

~ Crystal Waters

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*"Don't be afraid to go out on a limb...that's where the fruit is...
The hardest challenge is to be yourself in a world where everyone
is trying to make you be somebody else."*

~ E. E. Cummings

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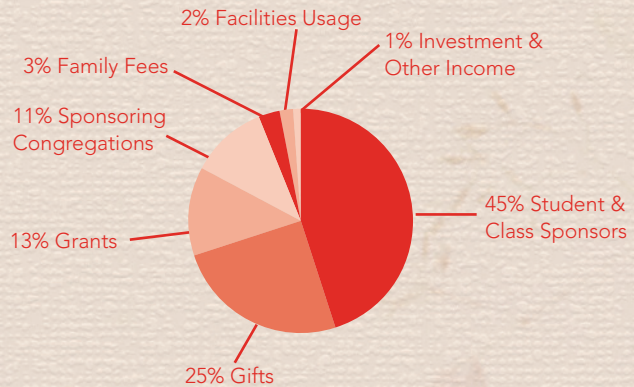
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Sisters Academy of Baltimore is committed to responsible stewardship of all donations received. During 2009-2010, our financial requirements continued to increase as we expanded our instructional program. Our benefactors responded generously through the student scholarship program, the class sponsor program, and annual giving.

Income 2009-2010

Student & Class Sponsors	\$403,386
Gifts	\$225,633
Grants	\$112,691
Sponsoring Congregations	\$95,000
Family Fees	\$28,513
Facilities Usage	\$20,195
Investments & Other Income	\$7,815

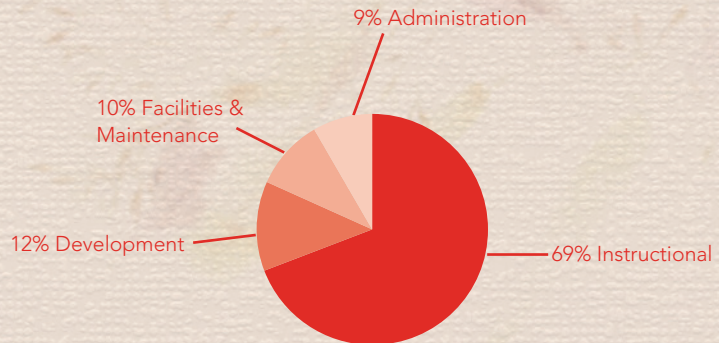
Total Income **\$893,233**



Expenses 2008-2009

Instructional	\$609,921
Development	\$103,090
Facilities & Maintenance	\$87,655
Administration	\$76,851

Total Expenses **\$877,517**



Members, Directors, Staff 2009-2010

Sponsoring Congregations

School Sisters of Notre Dame
Sisters of Bon Secours
Sisters of Mercy
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Board of Members

Barbara Bowers, SSND
Marian Schaechtel, SNDdeN
Joan Serda, RSM
Alice Talone, CBS

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Augusta Reilly, RSM
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Sheila Mosmiller Vidmar

Faculty and Staff

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Debra Liesen, SSND, Principal
Virginia Marie Brune, SSND
Joanne Campbell
Dorothy Daiger, SSND
Kathleen Donnelly
Regina Fabbroni
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Kathleen Lyon
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Christine Nesbitt
Mary Rice
Katherine Shamer
Mildred Simmonds-Brown
Barbara Tipton
Dinah Whye
Elizabeth Wood
Jennifer Zichelli



Our Mission

Sisters Academy of Baltimore, a Catholic, community-centered middle school, educates girls of different races, ethnic groups, and religions, from families of limited economic means, particularly those in southwest Baltimore. The Academy empowers its students to become agents of transformation in their families, communities, and society.

Sisters Academy of Baltimore is a member of the highly-successful NativtyMiguel Network of Schools, one of 64 schools located in 27 states serving over 4,600 children from underserved urban neighborhoods across America.

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