

**JOY IN  
THE JOURNEY**



**Sisters Academy  
of Baltimore**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019**



Our vision is that graduates of Sisters Academy will be well-educated, self-assured, spiritual, and committed young women who are so needed in our community, our nation, and indeed our world. They will be leaders who make a positive difference.

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD CHAIR

At the end of each day, our prayer is full of gratitude for the joys and blessings of the day. Finding joy day after day eventually becomes joy in the journey of a year.

We are pleased to present you with our report on the joy-filled journey of Sisters Academy of Baltimore during 2018-2019, our fifteenth year. As our travelling companions, your generosity benefits our students as they journey to become well-educated, self-assured, spiritual, and committed young women who are so needed in our world.

As scholarship sponsors, class sponsors, donors, foundations, corporations, Sisters of the sponsoring congregations, volunteers, and friends, you are our faithful companions on the journey. Through your generous gifts and spirit, we find joy even in the detours, wrong turns, and tedious stretches of the journey.

Your gifts helped us not only reach, but surpass our financial goals during the past year. We exceeded our budget in scholarship sponsors, class sponsors, and annual gifts. We met our goal in grants. Most significantly, your gifts provided the means for our students to do their best and be their best during their middle school journey.

In this report, we proudly share accomplishments of our students and graduates. We also report the annual financial summary and significant capital improvements. Our longest-serving staff members, Beth Lorete and Sister Virginia Brune, share their reflections on the journey.

We are pleased to tell you that our endowment has increased significantly during the past year. We are especially grateful to all donors who have contributed to the endowment over the years. Your gifts express hope for the future and confidence in our students, graduates, and mission.

As you read this report, may you find joy in your journey with us. Thank you for being our faithful travelling companions.

*Sister Delia Dowling, SSND*

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND  
President

*Andrea Giampetro-Meyer*

Andrea Giampetro-Meyer  
Chair, Board of Directors





# YEAR IN REVIEW 2018-2019

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We began our fifteenth school year by welcoming Mrs. Laura Minakowski as Principal. Mrs. Minakowski arrived to lead the students who participated in “New Frontiers,” the summer program for fifth grade applicants. As Principal, she chose the theme for the academic year, “Shine Forth the Goodness of God,” as the daily reminder that students and staff are called to reflect God’s love and light in our world. Throughout the year, Mrs. Minakowski introduced several new ways for students and parents to participate together in the life of the school, such as a “Back-to-School Ice Cream Social” and in February, a “Family Fun Night.”

In September, we received the exciting news that the Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism, with M&T Bank and the Baltimore Ravens, selected Sisters Academy of Baltimore as one of the 2019 Ravens Honor Rows Award recipients. We received the award for outstanding volunteerism and service provided to Paul’s Place. In recognition for the honor, students and staff were invited to attend a Baltimore Ravens football game on November 18. A group photo can be found on the inside back cover.

We also began the year with a generous grant from the Baltimore Women’s Giving Circle, supporting the addition of a new staff member for the expansion of our services to graduates, particularly those entering college. All graduates of Sisters Academy in the Class of 2015 earned their high school diplomas last spring, and all of these young women planned to continue their education in college, beginning in August 2019.

In May, Sisters Academy officially became a Maryland Green School with certification awarded from the Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education. The certification came after the students led a two-year initiative to increase awareness and integrate sustainable environmental practices throughout the school.

With the June graduation of the Class of 2019, our number of Sisters Academy graduates grew to 148 young women. Students in the Class of 2019 are now enrolled in the following high schools: Archbishop Spalding High School, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Episcopal High School (VA), Institute of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Preparatory School, Roland Park Country School, and Western High School. Two students were awarded full tuition Samuel Ready scholarships, one to Institute of Notre Dame and one to Roland Park Country School.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The sixth grade produced, directed, stage-managed, and acted in its own rendition of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." The class presented the performance for the students, faculty, and staff just before the Christmas holiday. In the season of Advent, the students prepared for Christmas with special prayers led by the eighth grade each day, culminating in the celebration of Las Posadas.
- Our sports program grew in basketball, soccer, and lacrosse. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade basketball teams played scrimmage games with middle school teams from Notre Dame Prep, Holy Angels School, Roland Park Country School, and Cardinal Sheehan School. Friends of Coach Angela Healy donated funds to purchase an electronic scoreboard, making us official.
- Student Diana Pinguil was selected by the Center for Talented Youth (CTY) of The Johns Hopkins University to participate in their summer program. Diana studied "Great Cases of American History" for three weeks at University of California, Santa Cruz. Dominique Wimbush, Tylah Allen, Anasia Singletary, and Veronica Henriquez participated in a week long engineering program during the summer at Bucknell University.
- Our graduates continued to stay connected. Uneeke Ferguson, Class of 2009, gave the address at Graduation. Daphnie Hain, Class of 2017, tutored regularly during the school year, and several other graduates assisted in various ways during the summer programs. Many graduates attended the annual Blessing and Investiture of the New Students and they enjoyed the graduate social hour afterwards. They also returned to campus for a special graduate brunch held in June.

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

For the past five years, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has provided grant funding to Sisters Academy of Baltimore for capital projects through the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program. Eligible projects are those that will protect the school building from deterioration, improve the safety of students and staff, and enhance the delivery of educational programs. Over five years, we have received between \$30,000 and \$45,000 each year for a total of \$193,694.

Major capital improvements have included:

- Replacement of most HVAC units in the school and gym
- Installation of drop ceilings, ceiling tiles and fans in classrooms
- Installation of new carpet in three classrooms and library
- Installation of resinous flooring in kitchen and pantry area
- Installation of white boards in classrooms
- Renovation of boys and girls bathrooms in gym
- Asbestos abatement in gym building
- Replacement of walk-in refrigerator in kitchen
- Installation of energy efficient LED lighting in school building
- Replacement of gates and railways in outdoor areas

# NOTABLE FACTS

DRIVEN BY ITS MISSION  
OF EDUCATION FOR  
TRANSFORMATION, SISTERS  
ACADEMY OF BALTIMORE IS A  
WELL-ESTABLISHED INSTITUTION  
THAT IS BOTH **VISIONARY** AND  
**PRACTICAL** WITH NOTABLE  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

**100%**

SAB STUDENTS RECEIVE  
DONOR-SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIPS

**89%**

SAB GRADUATES ATTEND A PRIVATE  
OR SELECTIVE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

**90%**

SAB ALUMNAE ATTEND COLLEGE,  
A POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL OR JOIN THE MILITARY

**97%**

ANNUAL BUDGET FUNDED BY DONORS

**\$0**

OPERATING DEBT

# SAB GRADUATES IN HIGH SCHOOL



One of Jaelah Jupiter's fondest memories of Sisters Academy is the Blessing and Investiture of the new class. During this annual ceremony, the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and graduates welcome the new class. Families glow with pride as they watch their daughters receive their stoles, the symbol of their incorporation in our learning community. Jaelah clearly remembers how long the stoles were.

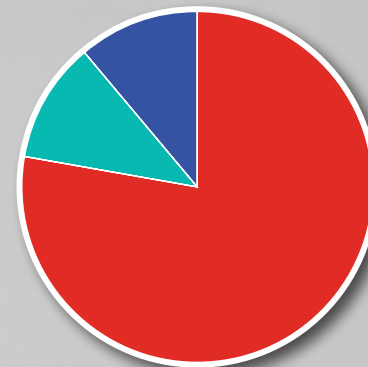
Indeed, the stole was long for a fifth grade girl, but Jaelah grew into the stole as she grew in grace, knowledge, confidence, leadership, and service over four years. Jaelah grew from a shy girl to a self-confident leader. She became fascinated with learning science and discovered her talent in the visual and performing arts. Jaelah credits the "Sisters Academy atmosphere" for helping her become her best self. She commented, "Students and teachers got along. We just knew that everyone was there to help."

After graduating from Sisters Academy in 2015, Jaelah received a full tuition Samuel Ready scholarship to the Institute of Notre Dame (IND). Jaelah reflected that her transition to high school was "smooth" and she felt that she was ready for all. At IND, Jaelah developed her interest in science and performed in musical and dramatic productions. At graduation, she received the award for outstanding achievement in drama. During the summers, she was a teaching assistant in New Frontiers, the program for students new to Sisters Academy.

Having graduated from the Institute of Notre Dame in June 2019, Jaelah is now in her first year at the University of Maryland College Park. She plans to major in environmental science and policy. Now the stole and all that it represents fits Jaelah "just right."

## SISTERS ACADEMY CLASSES 2015-2018

- 78% ■ Catholic High Schools
- 11% ■ Public Selective Enrollment High Schools
- 11% ■ Public High Schools



# 100%

100% of all Sisters Academy graduates in the Classes of 2008 to 2015 have obtained a high school diploma.

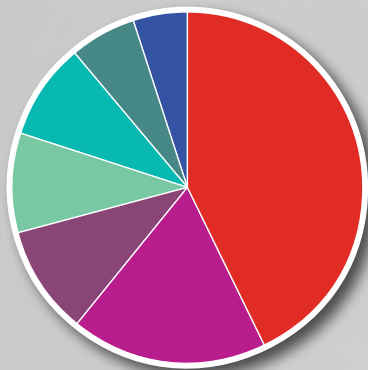
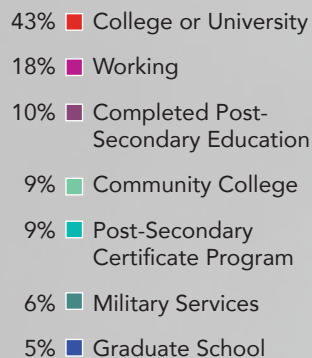
Sisters Academy graduates attended the following high schools in 2018-2019:

- Archbishop Spalding High School
- Baltimore City College High School
- Baltimore Polytechnic Institute
- The Catholic High School of Baltimore
- Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
- Institute of Notre Dame
- Lansdowne High School
- Mercy High School
- Mount de Sales Academy
- New Era Academy
- Notre Dame Preparatory School
- Patapsco High School and Center for the Arts
- Sharon High School (PA)
- St. Frances Academy
- Western High School
- Woodlawn High School

# SAB GRADUATES BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

## SISTERS ACADEMY CLASSES 2008-2014

### Education, Military Services, and Working Profile



Alumnae attended the following college and universities during 2018-2019:

Bowie State University (MD)  
Community College of Baltimore County (MD)  
Coppin State University (MD)  
Frostburg State University (MD)  
Harford Community College (MD)  
Harrisburg University (PA)  
Howard University (DC)  
Johns Hopkins University (MD)  
Loyola University Maryland (MD)  
Marymount University (VA)  
Morgan State University (MD)  
Mount Saint Mary's University (MD)  
North Carolina A&T State University (NC)  
Notre Dame of Maryland University (MD)  
Pratt Institute (NY)  
Rider University (NJ)  
Stevenson University (MD)  
Towson University (MD)  
University of Baltimore (MD)  
University of Maryland College Park (MD)  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore (MD)  
University of New Haven (CT)  
University of Tampa (FL)



Destiny Logan's journey from Sisters Academy through college placed her on a path to success as a student and as a collegiate athlete in track and cross country. "Sisters Academy offered me a great education. Everything I experienced in middle school – the long school day, the care and constant attention of my teachers, learning time management, and fun opportunities like summer camps at NDP – made all the difference in my desire and ability to succeed in high school, college, sports, and in life."

After graduation, Destiny attended Catonsville High School, where she was encouraged as an athlete. She then went on to Frostburg State University. In college, Destiny competed as a standout runner from 2014 to 2018. She earned honors as a runner and member of the relay team in the All-Capital Athletic Conference (CAC). She attributes her success not only to her college coach and parents, but also to Sr. Virginia Brune, SSND, who inspired her to learn and even taught her an appreciation for plants. Sisters Academy led her to understand, "Success is not given – it must be earned. You are always one choice away from changing your life."

In 2018, Destiny received her bachelor's degree in sociology. She is now in her second year as a graduate assistant with the Frostburg cross country and track & field teams while pursuing a graduate degree in Sports Management. Her goal is to become a professional sports agent and, one day, acquire her own athletic facility. Reflecting on the most significant lesson learned that has remained with her during her education, she paraphrases the words heard most often during her middle school days at Sisters Academy, "Never say 'I can't' because you do not know until you try. Believe you can succeed and you are half way there!"



# MEMBERS AND DIRECTORS

## Sponsoring Congregations

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

## Board of Members

Kimberly Baxter  
*Sisters of Mercy*  
Deborah Cerullo, SSND  
*School Sisters of Notre Dame*  
Mary Donohue, SNDdeN  
*Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur*  
Alice Talone, CBS  
*Sisters of Bon Secours*

## Board of Directors

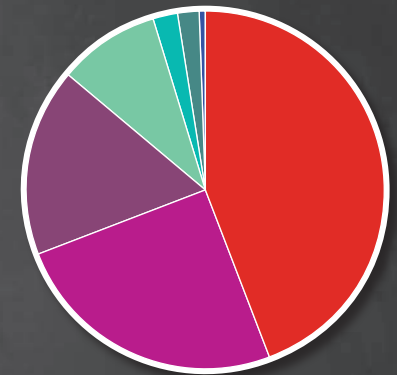
Lawrence Beyer  
Rosemary Donohue, SNDdeN  
Delia Dowling, SSND  
Anita Feeley  
Donna Fortson  
Andrea Giampetro-Meyer  
Douglas Groves  
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E. Tonas Kalil  
Dale McArdle  
Mark McCarty  
Moiria H. Monk  
Augusta Reilly, RSM  
John Riehl, IV  
Janet Schmick  
Janet Mary Shields, SSND  
Josette Towles

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2018-2019

Sisters Academy of Baltimore is committed to responsible stewardship of all donations received. During 2018-2019, 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.

## Operating Income 2018-2019

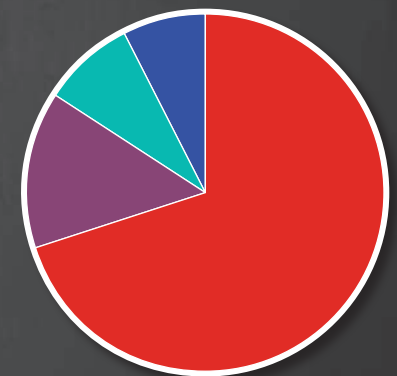
Students & Class Sponsors	\$565,958	■ (44.4%)
Annual Giving	\$318,525	■ (25.0%)
Grants	\$214,129	■ (16.8%)
Sponsoring Congregations	\$118,186	■ (9.3%)
Investment Income	\$27,767	■ (2.2%)
Family Fees	\$24,235	■ (1.9%)
Rentals & Miscellaneous	\$4,684	■ (0.4%)



**Total Income** **\$1,273,484**

## Operating Expenses 2018-2019

Instructional	\$861,500	■ (70.2%)
Development	\$171,786	■ (14.0%)
Administration	\$101,122	■ (8.3%)
Facilities & Maintenance	\$91,952	■ (7.5%)



**Total Expenses** **\$1,226,360**

These figures do not include capital income/expenses, donated goods/services, or depreciation, which are included in our audited financial report. For a copy of our most recent audit, please refer to our website, [www.sistersacademy.org](http://www.sistersacademy.org), under News & Media.



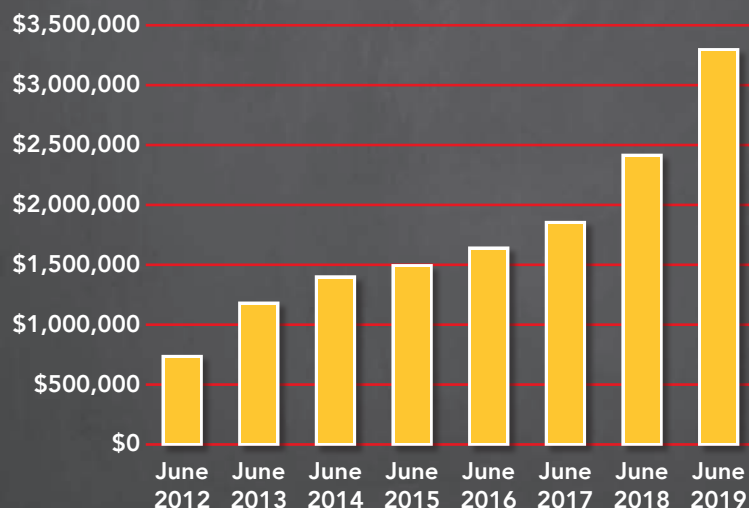
# GROWING OUR ENDOWMENT

## THE JEANNE BUR FISCHER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

When Sisters Academy of Baltimore opened in 2004, we also began the journey to sustain the school into the future by creating an endowment with an initial gift of \$125,000. Over the years, we continued to build the endowment through the generosity of donors who believed in and invested in the continuing vision of the school. Our steady endowment growth is due to sound, wise, and practical investments. In June 2019, the value of the endowment reached \$3,268,733.

Frank Fischer was one of our generous visionaries. In 2012, upon the death of his wife, Frank established an endowed scholarship in her memory. Jeanne Bur Fischer planned to volunteer at Sisters Academy when she retired from the Baltimore City public schools. Sadly, she died of cancer soon after her retirement. Frank contributed a gift of \$50,000 so that Jeanne's powerful and beautiful spirit would have an enduring effect on the lives of our students.

From 2012-2014, Jeanne's dear friend, Martha Oare, invited more than 100 of Jeanne's many friends and family to contribute to the scholarship fund and together they matched Frank's initial gift. Frank Fischer passed away on November 16, 2018 and, through his estate plans, he designated his final gift to the endowment at Sisters Academy. Because of his love of Jeanne and his vision, the Jeanne Bur Fischer Scholarship Fund exceeds \$170,000. Now Frank and Jeanne will continue to provide a scholarship for a student in perpetuity.



*"Year after year, a girl at Sisters Academy will feel intimately and directly the depth of Jeanne's love."*

— Martha Oare



# STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS 2018-2019

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

## Endowed Scholarships

Mary Catherine Bunting  
Jim & Gerry Cavanaugh  
Jeanne Bur Fischer Scholarship  
Fund  
France-Merrick Foundation  
Jesuit Community of Loyola  
University Maryland in honor of  
Rev. Timothy Brown, S.J.  
Middendorf Foundation  
Joseph & Clare Mosmiller

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## Sponsoring Congregations

School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Atlantic-Midwest Province  
Sisters of Bon Secours USA  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
South Central Community  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
East-West Province  
Ohio Province

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## Class Sponsors

Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Mission Fund  
Frank Family Fund for Sisters  
Academy of the Baltimore  
Community Foundation  
The Leroy M. Merritt Charitable  
Trust  
Montgomery Park, LLC &  
Washingtonville, LP  
Daniel G. & Jean K. Schuster  
Foundation

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## Student Sponsors

Absolute Service  
ATAPCO Group  
American Trading & Production  
Corporation  
Faye Alston Cook  
Paul & Jennifer Huston  
Jeffrey & Karen McCormack  
Anne & John Patterson  
Anonymous (Multiple Donors)  
Millicent & Peter Bain  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Circle #1  
Laura & Bob Buczkowski  
Janice & Jeffrey Burnett  
Marcia A. Cort  
Christine A. Lay  
Susan C. Vosloh  
John F. Wallenhorst  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Circle #2  
Danielle Jordan-Ellis  
Christine Morris  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Circle #3  
Laura & Bob Buczkowski  
Donna & Demetrius Fortson  
General Accounting Dept.  
Anthony Mangine  
Karen Mason  
Mark & Kimberly McCarty  
Kim & Geoff Moody  
Lillian & Frank Nevers  
Debra Pettus  
Pamela & Walter Schmidt  
Joel & Beth Stafford

Laishy Williams-Carlson &  
James Carlson  
Robert & Anne Bradshaw  
David & Susan Brune  
Catholic Community at Relay  
Jennie Boyer  
Patricia Butner  
Noreen & Thomas Christian  
Kendall† & Frank Dingle  
Theresa Donnelly & John Irwin  
Kerry & John Foy  
Anna Maria Gamble  
Beth Guest  
Mary Hambleton  
Kathleen & Burch Harmon  
Maura & Gregory Hill  
Marjean Irwin  
Maureen & Robert Keck  
Mary Jane & Joseph LeVasseur  
Kathleen Liparini  
Jaymie Litsey &  
C. William Michaels  
Geraldyn & Alan Magan  
Rossana & Bill Marsh  
Susan Middaugh  
Hope Miller  
Patricia & Alexander Petrlik  
Ann & Bret Pollack  
Mary Beth & Gary Ribar  
Patricia Rubacky  
Patricia Silva  
Brenda Sue Chilman  
Conveyor Handling Company  
James & Linda Dugan  
Marilyn Duker & Dale McArdle  
Janice & Ronald Ford

Frank Family Foundation Fund  
of the Baltimore Community  
Foundation  
Frank Family Fund for Sisters  
Academy of the Baltimore  
Community Foundation  
Friends of Sisters Academy Giving  
Circle  
Lillian Gibbons  
James & Nancy McDonald  
Regina McPhillips  
Kathleen & David Power  
Michele & John Zurad  
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Mark D. Gately  
Barbara Gaver  
Jennifer & Mark Geibig  
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G. B. Charities, Inc.  
Douglas & Joan Groves  
Mary Hambleton & Daughters  
Mary Hambleton  
Regina Hambleton  
Celia O'Brien  
Roland Harvey  
Margaret Hayes  
Mimie & Robert Helm  
Himmelrich Family Giving Circle  
Anna & Matt Kozlov  
Carrie Jo Himmelrich  
Ella Himmelrich  
Jacob & Sarah Himmelrich  
Pam & Sam Himmelrich  
Pam & Sam Himmelrich  
Beverly & Karl Ittner  
Lynn & Stuart Janney

Stephanie & Richard Johnston  
Martha & Chuck Kendall  
Mary Ann Kmetyk  
Peter Leffman  
Loyola University Maryland  
Giving Circle  
Larry & Linda Beyer  
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Andrea Giampetro-Meyer &  
Barry Meyer  
Karyl & Sal Leggio  
Jeanne & Thomas Phizacklea  
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Josette Towles  
Leslie Malin & Scott Helm  
The Manger Family Foundation  
Mazaika Family Foundation  
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Wayne McDowell Giving Circle  
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Service, Inc.  
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Augusta Reilly, RSM  
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Sheridan Foundation  
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Matthew & Krista Toddy  
Martina & Arthur Varnado  
John & Kate Walsh  
Isabel & Richard Waters  
Clare Wherley  
Peggy & John Wilckens  
Anne & John Wisniewski  
Ellen Yankellow & William Chapman





# DONORS 2018-2019

We appreciate your generous gifts as scholarship sponsors, donors to our Annual Appeal, contributions of in-kind services, and many volunteer hours to benefit our students' education, inspiring our vision for success. Thank you to all who support Sisters Academy of Baltimore.

## Circle of Distinction (\$100,000+)

Mary Catherine Bunting  
Jim & Gerry Cavanaugh

## Circle of Excellence (\$50,000 to \$99,999)

MSDE Boost Scholarship Program  
Middendorf Foundation, Inc.  
Sisters of Bon Secours USA  
Kathy & Jerry Wood Foundation

## Circle of Leadership (\$25,000 to \$49,999)

Anonymous  
Peter & Millicent Bain  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Mission Fund  
Estate of Frank Fischert  
Frank Family Fund for Sisters  
Academy of the Baltimore  
Community Foundation  
Rose Gordon Memorial Fund  
of the Baltimore Community  
Foundation  
Robert & Mimie Helm  
Richard & Eibhlin Henggeler  
Pam & Sam Himmelrich  
Moira & John Monk  
Joseph Mosmiller  
MSDE School Construction Program  
Joanne & Tim Regan  
School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Atlantic-Midwest Province  
Daniel G. Schuster, LLC  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
South Central Community  
Martina & Arthur Varnado  
Clare E. Wherley

## Circle of Honor (\$10,000 to \$24,999)

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Charitable Fund  
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Jesuit Community of  
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Stephanie & Richard Johnston  
Margaret & Jack Keane  
Martha & Chuck Kendall  
Philip & Mary Beth Lange  
Montgomery Park, LLC  
Margaret O. Moseley  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
East-West Province  
Ohio Province  
James & Jacqueline Stradtner  
Washingtonville, LP  
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## Circle of Stars (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

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The William L. and Victorine Q.  
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Bon Secours Mercy Health  
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David & Susan Brune  
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at The Associated: Jewish  
Community Federation)  
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Family Foundation)

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Peter Leffman  
The John J. Leidy Foundation, Inc.  
Lesley Malin & Scott Helm  
Mazaika Family Foundation  
Andrea & Benjamin Mazzoccoli  
Wayne & Colleen McDowell  
Karen & Emmett McGee  
The Joseph Mullan Company  
Kathy & Roger Novak  
Our Lady of the Angels Catholic  
Community, Catonsville, MD  
REVAL Foundation  
John & Susan Riehl  
John & Jonnie Ross  
St. Louis Parish, Clarksville, MD  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
Congregational Mission Fund  
Mary Louise Snyder  
Jeredith & James Stifter

Kathryn & Richard Szarko  
Matthew & Krista Toddy  
Robert & Arden Travers  
United Way of Central Maryland  
Anonymous Givers  
Isabel & Richard Waters  
Thomas Wilson Foundation  
Anne & John Wisniewski  
Ellen H. Yankellow &  
William Chapman

## Circle of Peace and Respect (\$1,000 to \$4,999)

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Bobbi† & Chip Ackers  
American Association of Healthcare  
Administrative Management  
(AAHAM) Maryland Chapter  
American Trading and Production  
Corporation  
Anonymous (Multiple Donors)  
Howard & Leslie Appleby  
Marie Bellantoni  
The Benevity Community Impact Fund  
Richard Berndt  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Central Accounts Payable  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Payroll Dept.  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Sponsorship Group #2  
Michael & Susanne Brown  
Laura & Robert Buczkowski  
Janice & Jeffrey Burnett  
Marie Cappiello  
Catholic Community at Relay,  
Relay, MD  
Mary Chairs Endowment Fund of the  
Catholic Community Foundation  
Samuel W. Chairs, Jr.

Children's Scholarship Fund  
of Baltimore  
Conveyor Handling Company, Inc.  
G. Norris & Joan N. Cook  
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Mary Ruzicka & Dick Crook  
Mary Dan & David Hand  
Anne-Stuart & Richard Darrell  
Marie D. Dunham  
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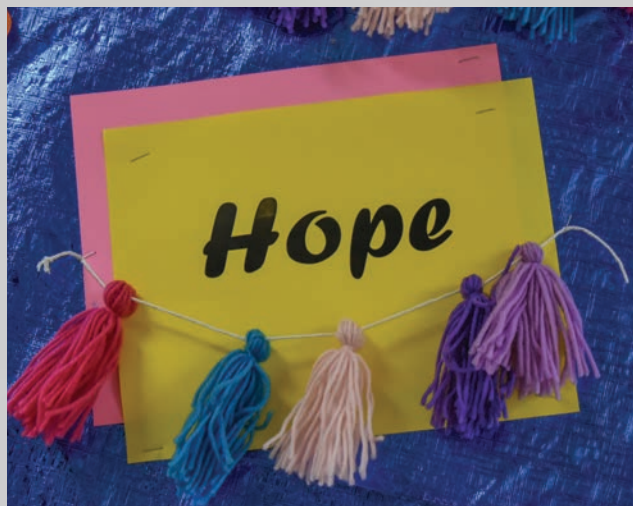
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# REFLECTIONS OF OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

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We are pleased to share the reflections of Sr. Virginia Marie Brune, SSND, and Mrs. Beth Lorete who have traveled our journey as dedicated faculty members over the past fifteen years. As the art and religion teacher, Beth came via the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry. Sr. Virginia chose to be part of Sisters Academy because in her words, "I was intrigued by the idea of creating a school in 2004 that liberates, transforms, and educates middle school girls. I decided I wanted to be part of making the vision come alive!"

## **You both began your journey in the beginning years of Sisters Academy. In your experience, what does it take for a young girl to succeed at SAB?**

**Beth:** It takes real dedication to the education we offer for both the student and her family. It takes excellent attendance, openness to new learning opportunities, such as religion class or participating in an Outward Bound field trip. It takes asking questions and having educational conversations. It takes accepting responsibility and ownership of our school space, doing daily chores, and being surrounded by positive, visual messages throughout the school. Most of all, it requires understanding the key elements of our mission and philosophy.

**Sr. Virginia:** It takes a community of four: students who are motivated with a desire to grow; parents and guardians who support the girls being accountable for learning and behavior; teachers and administrators who live the mission; and sponsors and donors who believe in the empowerment of young women.

## **What is the most significant lesson that a student learns during her middle school journey at Sisters Academy?**

**Sr. Virginia:** Embrace the journey to become the best version of yourself. The lesson is to create your own self-definition and to become the best you can be, and then to have the willingness to share your gifts with others.

**Beth:** I would add learning, respect for oneself, others, and all of creation."

## **What has given you the most joy in your journey with SAB?**

**Beth:** Day by day, seeing the girls' creativity in art classes and watching them grow in their skills. I also feel great joy when alumnae visit and share that they are still on their journey of education. And I enjoy seeing graduates give back as volunteers eager to work with the students.

**Sr. Virginia:** I agree, seeing the girls' potential, watching it take root and blossom as our graduates, no matter where they are – Baltimore city, western Maryland, the US Navy, Africa, China. And learning about their lives - being a wife and mother, serving others through social services, providing care in hospitals, and continuing their education in college, graduate school, law school, and medical school. This is the joy of our journey together.

## **What is your greatest hope for the journey as Sisters Academy continues forward?**

**Beth:** For our mission to always remain strong and that every graduate continues her journey of transformation.

**Sr. Virginia:** For the young girls, who are motivated to grow and want to make a positive difference in the world, that they will continue to step through the door of SAB, and with those who have gone before them, together they become young women who continue the work of transformation.





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# 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  
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