



Baal emphasizes stability during challenging school year

Emma Jamison
Julia Reedy
senior reporters

A little more than half way through her first year as principal here, Dr. Kathryn Baal discussed the actions taken to keep school open, highlighted the value of face-to-face learning and urged students to guard against biases during a press conference with journalism 1 students on Jan. 12 and 14.

To date, Marist has remained open for in-person instruction since school resumed in August. While this is an achievement that has been a source of pride for Baal, she still strives to do better.

"I think we are doing well," Baal said. "Are we perfect? No."

She credits our success as the result of the hard work of the entire administrative team and the safe return committee which was formed and met regularly throughout the summer.

"The Illinois Department of Public Health confirms that we have had no infection come from inside the building," Baal said. "I think a big part of that success has been thanks to our COVID team, which includes Assistant Principal for Student Services Beth O'Neill, school nurse Amanda Gaida and Athletic Director Eric Simpson."

Another crucial aspect of keeping everyone safe is limiting class sizes to 16 and spacing student desks six feet apart. Over the summer while the COVID team put together its plan, Baal notes that members had to take into consideration the student population.

"Our size, which has always been one of our strengths, has been a challenge during the pandemic," Baal said. "When we looked at different schedules, health and wellness remained our top priorities. We always try to do what is in the best interests of keeping our students safe."

She notes that the possibility school would go remote again depends on if the number of cases rises significantly or the state of Illinois ordered schools to close again. If this were the case, students would follow a schedule similar to the one used last spring.

However, Baal remains steadfast in her belief that as long as the school adheres to its safety protocols, it should remain open as everyone looks forward to a return to normal in the future.

"We are looking at what the new normal will be," Baal said. "Right now, we are hoping that by spring we will be in a much better place. But it is safe to assume that normalcy will not be fully restored until everyone has had two rounds of the vaccine."

Meanwhile, in an effort to make this last year of school more memorable for the seniors, the administration has transformed the back of the ARC into a senior lounge. The tennis courts have been turned into ice skating rinks, giving students an opportunity to socialize and have fun safely.

With sights set on spring, seniors and their parents received a survey on Jan. 15 to give input on end-of-the-year activities, including prom and graduation.

"Our intention is to hold both events, but they may look different this year in

terms of how we can do them," Baal said. "I have two nephews who are seniors this year, so I have a lot of empathy for what you are all going through."

Baal further urged students at all grade levels not to lose hope.

"I always remember a quote by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, something that inspired me back when I ran marathons," Baal said. "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." While you may not be able to see it now, I truly believe that your generation will come out of this pandemic experience stronger and more resilient."

Acknowledging that the past year has made it difficult for people to develop relationships, Baal hopes that being back in school will make this better for everyone.

"Trying to connect meaningfully in different ways has been a struggle," Baal said. "But relationships happen in a lot of different ways. I think relationships can even be formed on Zoom."

Baal also addressed some of the challenges with respect to race relations faced by our nation over the summer.

"Culture is something we are constantly looking to improve upon here at school," Baal said. "The death of George Floyd, as well as the deaths of too many others before him, has forced us to look at our biases and prejudices with respect to race, gender and socioeconomic differences."

Floyd, an African American man, was killed by Derek Chauvin, a police officer who knelt on Floyd's neck after arresting him in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020. Floyd's death sparked nationwide outrage and protests.

Baal encourages people to look within themselves and strive to make internal choices that will lead to positive outcomes. She credits technology with giving students a platform through which they can express themselves.

"I think we all have biases," Baal said. "But the difference between the world I grew up in and the world you're growing up in is that social media allows us to use our voices in different ways. When I was a teenager, I had a voice, but I wasn't sure how to use it."

She notes that moving forward, use of social media is something the administration plans to focus on to help students to find and use their voices responsibly and respectfully.

School culture is another area about which Baal cares deeply.

"We have to focus on diversity and inclusion," Baal said. "A large part of our cultural vision as a school is to educate people and help them develop a better understanding of those who may come from different backgrounds or share different views," Baal said. "It is important to learn how to see someone else's perspective, how to listen and how to disagree with others respectfully."

Baal encourages students to examine their own biases as she continues to examine hers.

"In guarding against my own biases, I try to put myself in someone else's shoes," Baal said. "Everyone has a story and I do not know everyone's stories. So before you speak or act, pause and try to listen. Before responding to someone, one should always ask, 'How do I make sure I am being inclusive in what I say?'"



photo by John Gonczy

Principal Dr. Kathryn Baal held a press conference with members of the journalism 1 class on Jan. 12 and 14, focusing on the impact of the pandemic on our school community and her vision for the future.

While the pandemic has caused Baal to reprioritize some of her goals as principal, she continues to work with the administrative team to plan for the future.

"I think it's important to set aside a vision or strategic plan," Baal said. "One of the things I wanted to do was spend time with other people in leadership roles to determine how our core values align with our mission and then set goals based on that."

Baal emphasizes our ongoing mission by using the phrase "Still Marist," which came about last year at the start of the pandemic. It is a phrase that she feels will remain long after the pandemic is over.

"'Still Marist' is a statement that can be used in many different situations," Baal said. "It reflects who we are and the great potential we have for the future."

Prior to coming to Marist, Baal served as principal for seven years at Loyola Academy. As the second semester continues, she revealed what she has learned, or relearned, during the pandemic.

"I have had to remind myself that there is no perfect solution," Baal said. "There are so many stakeholders in an organization and, as a large school, I have to do what is best for the students, the faculty and the sustainability of the institution."

Baal also hopes that as a result of the pandemic and all the changes it has brought about, students will gain an appreciation of the unique learning experience they have been through.

"During this pandemic, students are learning in real time and will emerge stronger for it," Baal said. "As teenagers, you may not see what all of this is doing for you now. In the long run, I assure you that it will make a difference among your generation and that your generation will make a difference in the world."

She also talked about the important role faith plays, calling it a constant theme in an ever-changing world.

"I firmly believe that God does not give us more than we can handle," Baal said. "I taught chemistry and a common symbol used in chemistry is the Delta sign. What

I love about the image of the Delta, which is a symbol for change, is that it also can represent the Holy Trinity-the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Faith is central for yourself, for others and for the place you are working in. Change is always present. It is just life. As you learn how to pivot and stay open-minded, recognize that during the changes and challenges you face, it is your faith that will get you through."

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Theatre Guild rehearsing spring musical for streaming

Delaney Powers
junior reporter

The Marist Theatre Guild will present a virtual production of “Singin’ in the Rain” as this year’s spring musical. The show will be filmed in late March and will be available for streaming during the weekends of April 16-18 and April 23-25. “Singin’ in the Rain” premiered as a movie musical starring legendary American dancer Gene Kelly in 1952. The film was adapted for the Broadway stage in 1985. The story focuses on silent movie star Don Lockwood (played by senior Matthew Warakowski and junior Owen Gainer) who is in a phony romance with the vain actress Lina Lamont (played by senior Madelyn Jaworek and junior Mia Padilla) to create more public interest for their films. “The Dueling Cavalier,” the movie Lockwood and Lamont are working on, suddenly gets turned into a musical. Enter Kathy Selden (played by senior Una Fortier and senior Angelina Corcoran),

a chorus girl Lockwood meets, is going to do voice overs for Lamont, who cannot sing, and will get a screen credit. Lamont is furious and begins scheming against Selden as the plot unfolds. “I have been performing during all four years of high school, so I have worked towards this role since I was a freshman,” Fortier said. “When I saw the cast list, I was so thrilled that my hard work and dedication had paid off. I have never played a leading lady, so I can’t wait to push myself to bring Kathy to life.” Although the production and protocols look a little different this year due to the ongoing pandemic, the cast is certain the quality of the performances will not be affected. “The show will still have all the singing, dancing, and acting that it would normally have,” Jaworek said. “It’s just that on stage we will be following the social distancing guidelines by wearing masks and standing six feet apart.” Ticket information and show times will be available on the Marist website in late March.



photo by Hannah Finnegan

Leads in the Theatre Guild’s spring production of “Singin’ in the Rain” (L to R) PJ Cunningham, Evan Fox, Mia Padilla, Madelyn Jaworek, Angelina Corcoran, Una Fortier, Matthew Warakowski and Owen Gainer get ready for rehearsal in the RedHawk Theatre on Feb. 8.

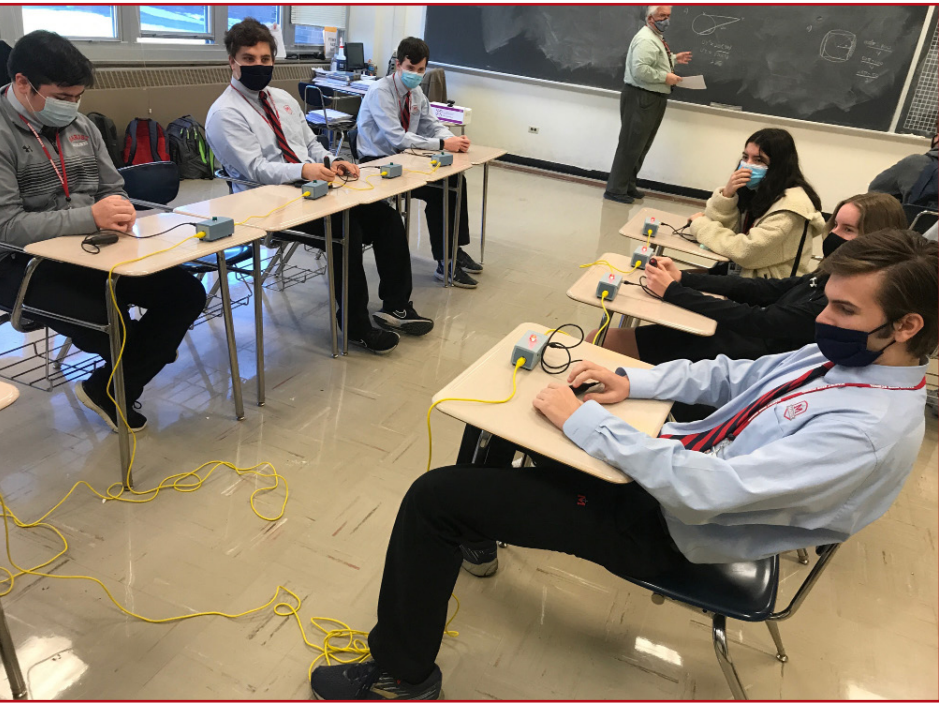


photo by PJ Cunningham

Members of the RedHawk academic team practice after school on Jan. 13 in preparation for competitions later this spring. The IHSA may allow meets to resume beginning in March.

Academic team hopes to face competition

Patrick Maxwell
junior reporter

The RedHawk academic team is holding out hope that members might have a few opportunities to compete this year, even if it is not face-to-face as usual. Last year, the varsity team finished 12-2 overall and went 3-0 in the conference tournament to place first overall. Varsity coach Jeff Nicholson wants the team to have the best experience possible during the pandemic, especially the seniors who have been on the team all four years. “If the IHSA season doesn’t happen, the seniors will be upset, but the team will continue practicing together with their friends and that is a positive,” Nicholson said. Senior PJ Cunningham, a four-year veteran of the team, is optimistic that the season will happen. “Academic team competitions are one of the safer activities with regard to COVID,”

Cunningham said. “While the season will obviously be a lot shorter, I am hopeful that I’ll get to see that answer buzzer go off one last time as a senior.” If the IHSA gives the green light for competitions to take place in person, a major change will be that only three players per side will compete instead of the normal five. Every time that there is a substitution during the game, players will have to sanitize the playing surface. Nicholson looks forward to working with his team the rest of this school year regardless of what happens. “Academic team practices give students something more than just going to school and doing your homework,” Nicholson said. “It is so much more than that. Friends getting together and doing something that they enjoy is the most important part.” Nicholson also pointed out that even if there are no competitions this year, the team will be more prepared than ever for next season because they will continue practicing until the end of May.

Club helps students evolve

Haley Fisher
senior reporter

EVOLVE, an acronym that stands for Empathize, Volunteer, Observe, Lead, Vitalize and Enrich, is a club that was started by coach Rob Topps and counselor Erik Christensen five years ago to give students a chance to have a place to connect with their peers and find their voices. “Our overall mission is to give a voice to our students, particularly minorities, and promote greater inclusion within our community,” Topps said. “I felt there was a need to have all voices of the school heard. EVOLVE is a great melting pot of students and is a good place for them to talk about anything they need.” The club’s mission is to give students a space to speak how they are affected by issues that arise inside and outside of school. “EVOLVE is a club that focuses on diversity and inclusion,” club president Kaylen Baker said. “At our meetings, we discuss and process real world issues.”

Due to the new second semester schedule, the club meets every other week and group discussions are led by the members. Senior Isabella Camarena says she joined EVOLVE to make a difference within her community. “I wanted to share my stories and come up with solutions with the help of other students,” said Camarena. “I enjoy getting together with students as well as planning events for the school in an attempt to bring more appreciation to our diverse community.” Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, it remains unclear what larger scale plans the club will be able to accomplish this year. “I would love to be able to do something to top last year’s fashion show,” Topps said. “But we don’t know yet. For now, we continue to meet in smaller groups. Hopefully, by the end of the year we can do something bigger.” Anyone interested in joining EVOLVE should see Mr. Christiansen in guidance or Coach Topps in the cafeteria.



photo by Matthew Warakowski

Members of the EVOLVE club and co-moderator Mr. Erik Christensen met in the RedHawk Theatre to review the events and discuss the aftermath of the Jan. 6 raid on the Capitol. The club, founded five years ago, aims to give students an outlet to discuss issues openly in a respectful environment.

Speakers advance to sectionals

Angel Ortiz Jr.
senior reporter

The RedHawk speech and acting team finished in fourth place in the IHSA regional tournament on Sat., Feb. 6.

Senior Una Fortier placed first in prose reading and third in special occasion speaking. Fortier will advance to sectionals on Feb. 13, from which the top three finalists in each category advance to the state finals on Feb 20.

“As a senior, I am thrilled to finish my speech career with two speeches I love,” Fortier said. “It took a ton of hard work to perfect both speeches.”

Joining Fortier at sectionals are junior Owen Gainer, who won humorous interpretation and sophomore Emma Fishback, who took third place in dramatic interpretation.

Senior Emma Ortega, who took fourth place in poetry reading and original oratory, and sophomore Kelly Stevens who took fourth in humorous duet acting with Gainer also advanced to sectionals.

Due to the pandemic, tournaments this season followed a mixed format, with contestants submitting a video for preliminary rounds on Thursday. Videos are judged and the finalists compete live on Zoom that Saturday.

“We have still been able to practice and compete as much as we normally would,” head coach Samantha Cullen said. “The virtual formats make it easier for students who don’t have transportation to Zoom into practice and compete from home. The most difficult part is that we compete mostly without an audience, which is something we are definitely not used to.”

Cullen, who coaches the team with foreign language teacher Robert Distasio, emphasized that the goals for the team have not changed in spite of the transition to recorded and virtual performances.

“Honestly, my goal was just to have a season at all, and then when it was happening, my goal was to adapt to the new format as quickly as possible,” Cullen said. “Our competitors have risen to the challenge of this new format and I’m very proud of the work they have put in.”



photo by Maya Warakowski

Members of the RedHawk speech and acting team pose for a photo before the Jan. 26 competition hosted virtually by Reavis High School. Among the RedHawks placing were Owen Gainer (3rd-humorous interpretation) and Una Fortier (3rd-prose reading).

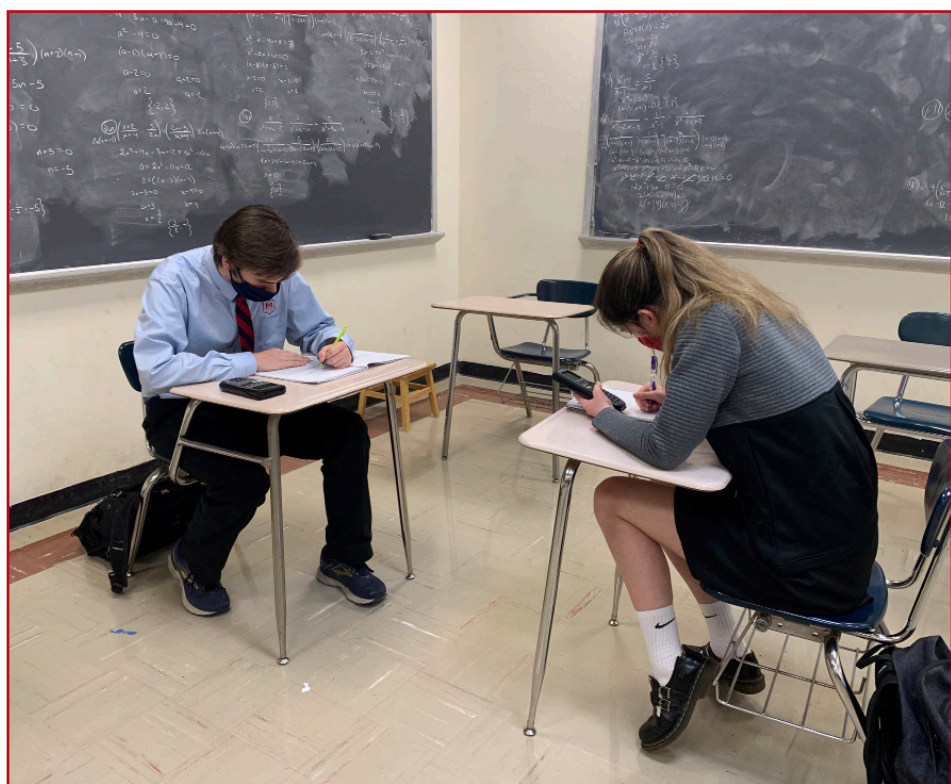


photo by Kaylee Frederking

Junior RedHawk math team members Mark Viz and Kelly Hughes practice after school on Feb. 4 in preparation for regionals and sectionals, to be held virtually on March 16-18.

Math team’s success keeps multiplying

Kaylee Frederking
junior reporter

The RedHawk varsity math team seniors will compete for the first time this season tomorrow, Feb. 11.

The competition will be moderated by Coaches Jeff Nicholson and Owen Glennon here at school. Team members will take tests and then submit them electronically to the Mathematics Teachers’ Association for scoring by its board members.

The sophomores and freshmen members will also complete a series of four nationwide Catholic math league contests. After the first two of these competitions, the RedHawk sophomores are currently ranked first in the nation. The entire team will compete virtually in the ICTM regionals and sectionals on March 16 through March 18.

The team practices every day after school, but is divided into A and B groups in order to maintain social distancing protocols.

“I’m extremely proud of how the team has adapted to changes with practices while continuing to meet the high expectations and goals that are expected from them,” Nicholson said.

Nicholson and Glennon have coached together for many years to lead the RedHawks to consistent success. Last season, the RedHawks once again finished undefeated in the Catholic League. The team was also ranked 5th in the state.

Senior Thomas Kavanaugh, a four-year veteran of the team, is looking forward to the Feb. 11 competition.

“We are confident that we will do our best at this competition in an honest and effective manner,” Kavanaugh said. “The pandemic has made it more difficult to practice because we have to collaborate on the more difficult problems. That is harder to do when you have to stay six feet apart from one another.”

His teammate, senior Mia Norris, agrees. “We look forward to meeting our Catholic rivals in March, particularly Fenwick, our toughest competition.”

RACISM, ANTIRACISM, AND YOU

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February 25 6:30 pm Zoom

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Open to incoming freshmen through seniors

Sign-up to receive notifications about virtual events at remind.com/join/olpl and join our virtual Teen Room on Discord at discord.gg/9QkYzJbTch.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
Please email kadolfo@olpl.org for more details.

Help clean up a local park!
Sunday, April 25, May 16, May 30, 11am-2pm
Work with Ms. Pat Pollard to help clean up one of our local parks.
Please email kadolfo@olpl.org to sign-up.

Book Reviews
We are looking for YA book reviews! Write book reviews about what you’ve read the past few weeks to earn volunteer hours. You can do this in video, audio or written format. Reviews will be posted on the YA Tumblr page. For each submission, you can earn one hour of volunteering, for up to three total hours.

Volunteer Take/Make Kits
Stop by the Adult Services Desk to pick up a kit.

Cards for Hospitalized Kids
Create happy, uplifting cards for kids in hospitals. Instructions for making cards and how to return them will be provided in the kits. Cards should be handmade and not store bought. One service hour for four completed cards.

Birthday Cards
Create birthday cards for kids in foster care. Instructions for making cards and how to return them will be provided in the kits. Cards should be handmade and not store bought. One service hour for four completed cards.

STUDY
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Study tool: Brainfuse!
Visit olpl.org and check out a new resource called Brainfuse. Sign-up to get access to live tutoring, writing center help, flashcards for SAT and more!

Snack and Study Finals Kits
May 17-28
Do you miss having snacks and puppy breaks at the Library during Finals Week? Stop by the Library for a Snack & Study to-go kit!
One per student, must show HS ID. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram for more details!

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DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS AT OLPL
Every other Saturday from 1-4pm
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March 20
Goblins, Goblins and More Goblins
April 3
Exploring Phandalin
April 17
Banshees, Zombies and Orcs, OH MY!
May 1
Cragmaw Castle Adventures
May 15
Band together with the first party of OLPL adventurers to defend the town of Phandalin and conquer Cragmaw Castle. Join our first AYA DnD Campaign for a five session adventure. No experience necessary. High school students and adults are welcome to meet with us virtually through Foundry Virtual Tabletop.
Registration is required at olpl.org. Contact Natalie for questions at natejonghe@olpl.org.

BOOKNERDS CLUB
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Sign-up by May 1 on cal.olpl.org/event/7523775. Limit 10 participants during pilot. Open to high school students and adults.

SAVE THE DATES!
Thursday, March 25, 7pm
Thursday, April 15, 7pm
Wednesday, May 12, 7pm
Join Teen Room Staff for a variety of IG Lives this spring! We will discuss books, provide tips/tricks, talk about what we’re watching, reading, listening to, share at home activities and more! Be sure to follow us on Instagram @olpl_ya to find out more details on the topics of discussion for each date.

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As an open forum, the *Sentinel* welcomes and encourages letters to the editor and guest editorials. Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less and must be signed by the author. Guest editorials are limited to 500 words and must also be signed by the author.

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In the event the *Sentinel* publishes an error, a correction or retraction will be published in the following issue.

COVID’s most beneficial side effect: resilience

Many adults, including Principal Kathryn Baal, have consoled high school students who feel as though their teenager years have been ruined by COVID-19 by pointing out that this pandemic will make teenagers more resilient.

Baal and the other adults are absolutely correct. When the pandemic is over, teenagers will emerge more resilient and the lessons we have learned since March 2020 will prove useful for the rest of their lives.

Teenagers have had to deal with constant confusion and anxiety regarding both their academic and social lives as they navigate the many other obstacles presented by this pandemic.

Stanford University psychologists published research that shows that the ability of teenagers to endure the pandemic is closely tied to the strength of their executive function abilities, which protect the brain from risk factors that worsen symptoms of depression and anxiety during stressful times.

Life is not fair. Experiencing this now will make it easier for us to fight the battles we will face later in life.

On a more positive note, many teenagers have benefited from social media relationships during isolation. Activities normally done physically together now happen virtually, including game nights, parties and movie nights. The ability to turn a negative situation into something fun proves how resilient and resourceful teenagers are.

Some teenagers who are accustomed to a very social life or those who depend on others for happiness have fallen into a depression.

It is important to reach out to teenagers and offer support and motivate them to persist. University of Illinois Chicago researchers have created a mental health campaign called Path 2 Purpose, designed for teenagers who are struggling with depression and provide education on how to manage stress and combat sadness with mindfulness, stress-reduction and relationship building skills online.

The principal investigator of the P2P research program, Dr. Benjamin Van Voorhees stated that he began the project to support kids through social media, especially those who live in areas without

mental health resources. He said building resilience and supporting teenagers is very important during this time.

Dealing with isolation and constant anxiety in a year where virtually all resources are available online is in some ways easier than if this crisis had occurred 10 years ago. However, dealing with anything that tampers with our mental or emotional health in any context is harmful, no matter the resources available.

It is so important for adults to acknowledge the pain teenagers are going through. Teens have been forced to surrender their “glory years” for days spent alone, remaining six feet apart from family and friends and sitting at home on weekends. Trying to convince teenagers that this will ultimately benefit them is a really tough sell, but it is something that we do need to keep in mind.

Teenagers should not feel guilty if they struggle with mental health issues or feel cheated by this pandemic.

All feelings are valid.

Bad feelings and bad times will pass.

And someday, we will all get to go to another concert.



What we can (and should) learn from Amanda Gorman

With President Biden and Vice President Harris and a host of dignitaries looking on, 22 year old Amanda Gorman made history as the youngest poet to speak at a presidential inauguration on Jan. 20. Gorman is the second African American woman to deliver an inaugural poem following Maya Angelou at President Bill Clinton’s 1993 inauguration.

Gorman has broken barriers with her writing, garnering praise at the national level after being named the nation’s first ever National Youth Poet Laureate in 2017.

Gorman read her poem “The Hill We Climb,” a poignant piece which encourages hope, prosperity and unity as a new presidency emerges during an unprecedented time in U.S. history.

*If we merge mercy with might,
and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy
and change our children’s
birthright
So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left
with.*

To put it simply, these words are a call to action—a call to reflect, to rebuild and to restore. These words lay the foundation of the American dream, and serve as a reminder of the very aspirations we, as American citizens, continue to strive for.

And while the poem has served as a beacon of light, it is the young poet herself who offers the greatest source of inspiration.

There is no denying that Gorman can deliver a perfectly poised, articulate speech.

But growing up, Gorman struggled with a speech impediment, which continued into her later years at Harvard College.

Rather than feeling discouraged and allowing the impediment to rob her of her voice, Gorman turned to writing as a form of self-expression.

Gorman explained to CNN’s Anderson Cooper that as she continued to write and recite the words aloud, her impediment began to fade, as did her self-doubt. She attributes her writing as her method of speech pathology, as well as rapping “Aaron Burr, Sir,” a song from Lin-Manuel

Miranda’s Broadway musical “Hamilton,” which she included in her inaugural poem.

Gorman is also no stranger to the trials and tribulations of injustice. Where some may grow cold and indifferent, Gorman grows impassioned and dedicated. It is through these injustices that Gorman draws most inspiration for her writing, and aspires to serve as a catalyst for change. She displays paramount activism and encourages her audience to follow suit.

Gorman also aspires to be sworn into office as president herself one day. In 2017, Gorman told The New York Times that she wants to run in 2036. With infinite potential and a clear vision, Gorman shows that anything is possible. Perhaps at her inauguration, history will be made yet again with another inaugural speaker.

Through her colorful and diverse career, Gorman stands as an example of overcoming the adversity we face within ourselves, or the adversity which surrounds us. She teaches that through hard work, passion and determination, no dream is unattainable and no mountain is too lofty to climb.

Vice President Harris contributes to year of shattered records

Delaney Powers
junior columnist

This past year was a year of shattering records. It seemed that every day a new death, hospitalization or COVID case number record was broken.

But not all the firsts in 2020 were bad.

Women made significant leaps to further close the gaps of gender diversity in government and in sports.

Kamala Harris made history in the election in November as the first African American, first South Asian American and the first woman to be named the vice president of the United States.

According to an article published at GenderontheBallot.org, of the 141 women serving in Congress 51 are women of color. In the House of Representatives, 44% of the 61 new members will be women.

Women are making strides in professional sports as well.

Liz Pardo is the first female to be on a minor league coaching staff in baseball. She

will serve as the strength and conditioning coach for the Aberdeen IronBirds, the minor league team of the Baltimore Orioles. Alyssa Nakken is Major League Baseball’s first female assistant coach, having joined the San Francisco Giants staff on July 20, 2020.

Professional baseball has followed the trend of the NFL and NBA. These organizations now include five women who are owners of teams. The Miami Marlins made history hiring Kim Ng as the first female general manager in baseball. According to Time Magazine, New York Yankees hired Ng in 1988 as the youngest assistant general manager in baseball.

Ng currently has 30 years of experience working in baseball operations. In the past, she interviewed for a general manager’s jobs seven times. Finally, with all her experience, she could not be turned down an eighth time. Hopefully, there will be even more female general managers, head coaches and commissioners in professional sports as more women follow the path blazed by Ng and others.

Although this was a year of progress, the world lost a champion fighter against gender discrimination. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away on Sept. 18. She was the co-founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Women’s Rights Project and the second female in history named to the Supreme Court.

During her 27 years on the bench, Ginsburg helped women make strides toward equal pay and helped make state-founded schools admit women. Ginsburg was proud of the work she did for woman’s rights and would be proud of all the strides toward gender equality made this year, particularly with the election of Vice President Harris.

2020 has been a cloudy year, but the silver lining was all the progress women made in government and sports. This is a trend that must continue in 2021 and beyond.

As Vice President Harris said in her victory speech, “While I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last.”

Standing on the
shoulders of those
who rose first

Faith Harper
junior columnist

Black History month is normally celebrated by remembering widely-known Civil Rights activists like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. or Rosa Parks. We should learn the names and stories of other less famous individuals, people who continue to pave the way for minorities to move forward.

Political activist Angela Davis is known as the Black woman going into a courtroom with her fist up and afro out. At a young age, Davis faced racial conflicts, including when she started interracial study groups which were broken up by police. Reporter Lanre Bakare wrote for The Guardian about the need for Davis to reach out to the next generation of thinkers, which led her to become a history professor at the University of California.

The need for change was apparent to Davis as well as to former slave Henry “Box” Brown. On March 23, 1849, Brown was shipped in a box to Virginia where slavery was abolished. According to the book “Henry’s Freedom Box,” abolitionist Samuel Smith marked the box as “dry goods,” aiding Brown to arrive to the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society Headquarters safely. Even after being stuffed in a small box for a day and a half, Brown emerged grateful and recited a psalm when he reached his destination. From there, Brown continued to encourage others about freedom and share his story while performing as a magician.

Not every Black activist lives in the past. Motivational speaker Deshauna Barber is a captain in the United States Army Reserve on top of being the first soldier to win the 2016 Miss USA pageant. Going from serving on an army reserve to winning a pageant for District of Columbia is what taught Barber to not be afraid of failure but to be fearful of regret.

Barber competed in her state pageant seven times before winning. She continues to advise audiences that, if not ourselves, then who will make that one change in our lives. She has inspired many in the black and brown community, including scientist Kára McCullough who was crowned Miss USA in 2017.

Grammy-nominated rapper Kendrick Lamar is one of many performers who use their platform to talk about social justice in a way young people can comprehend. He does it through music. Reporter Malique Lewis explained in an article on The Harbinger about how the message that Lamar shares through his music is almost like a reassurance to the black community, that everything is going to be alright for themselves and generations to come if they believed it can be.

Inspiration comes in many shapes, forms and sources, from teachers and magicians to beauty queens to rappers. Familiarizing ourselves with the numerous voices involved in Black history is one way we can all do our part in becoming united and being a step closer to understanding the “struggle.”

These activists continue to encourage the next generation to realize that giving up is the birth of regret.

We would also do well to reflect on the words of novelist James Baldwin:

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

photo opinion

compiled by Matthew Warakomski and Kaylee Frederking

As we celebrate Black History Month, which Black American, living or dead, inspires you most and why?



Sarah Kolkmeier
Assistant Principal of Academics

Rosa Parks played a pivotal role in the Montgomery Bus Boycotts in taking a stand for her civil rights. I am inspired by her conviction and strength to take a stand against injustice. She represents an unyielding woman with a strong moral compass and she challenges me to do the same.



Rob Topps
Evolve Club moderator

Muhammad Ali because of what he stood for. He gave up his living and livelihood because he refused to fight in the Vietnam War. He believed in something and was willing to stand up and sacrifice for it and that's why he inspires me and why I admire him so greatly.



Br. Hank Hammer
Marist legend

Without a doubt, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I studied his writings in college and, even though I was just 21 years old, I was amazed at how rooted in the Gospels his writings are. He has always been someone I admired because he was willing to risk his life for his beliefs. Not many people are willing to do that.



Ms. LaToya Hayes
Spanish teacher

Harriet Tubman's accomplishments are constant reminders that in the midst of adversity, social inequality and racism, I still have the power to make positive change. Progress is achieved each time I advocate on behalf of those unable to speak for themselves.



Kamron Beal
freshman

Malcolm X inspires me as a person to think more outside of the box. He was very intelligent and thought a great deal about his own people and about the world in general. So I think he was an influencer outside of just his race. I want to study psychology and I always thought of Malcolm as a therapist, not just as a Civil Rights Leader.



Emma Fishback
sophomore

I have always admired Josephine Baker, an American entertainer and Civil Rights activist. Her incredible career as a dancer brought her from New York to Paris, where she attained secrets from the Nazis and passed them on to the French Resistance. She eventually returned to the U.S. where she fought against discrimination, refusing to perform for segregated audiences.



Julianna Coleman
junior

Vice President Kamala Harris inspires me because not only is she the first woman to be elected to that office, but she is the first Black woman to do so. It's extremely inspiring to me because it goes to prove that no matter what race or ethnicity you are, you can be whatever you want to be in this life if you work hard for it. I like how outgoing she is and that she is not afraid to speak out on topics that many other people tend to shy away from.



John Stube
senior

Whoopi Goldberg is inspirational because of all she has accomplished in her life. She is one of my favorite comedians and actors. I enjoyed her work in the 2017 film “9/11,” and the comedy shows in which she has performed. She has won many awards, including an Emmy, A Grammy, the Oscar and a Tony award. I admire her and I am inspired by her self motivation, hard work, and dedication.

School nurses on front line during COVID pandemic

Jordan Mighty
junior reporter

For the past year, times have been rough for a lot of people. Most schools have been remote, but many Catholic schools returned to in person learning this year. At the center of the schools that are open are the school nurses, leaving many to wonder how these professionals are handling it all. School nurse Amanda Gaida has played a big role in keeping Marist open four days a week last semester and five days a week this semester. Though this is her first year at Marist, she came with a great deal of experience. “I was formerly a school nurse at Mother McAuley,” Gaida said. Before that, I was a school nurse at Lemont High School, and before that, I was at Christ Hospital for 18 years.” Over the summer, she worked with the administrative team and safe return committee to come up with a plan for reopening school in August. Gaida notes there were many concerns.

“As we prepared for reopening, we had to address the fears that people had about returning to school since we went remote last March,” Gaida said. “The big questions that we had to answer were ‘What do we need to do to have the school ready and how can we keep the faculty, staff and students safe?’” Working together, the COVID team came up with a number of answers. “For the first semester, we enforced a six-foot social distance measure and took out all but 16 chairs and desks from the classrooms,” Gaida said. “We created a hybrid schedule that allowed 800 students in the building for two days a week. We subscribed to the Health360 program to provide faculty, staff and students with a way to report whether or not they were experiencing symptoms. If a person experiences symptoms or is exposed to someone who tests positive, they have to stay home from school.”

Another factor that contributes to the reason that Marist has remained open since August is that we have been performing contact tracing along with the Chicago Department of Public Health. “We follow the CDPH protocols to keep up safety measures,” Gaida said. “I continue to consult with doctors to report cases and they give us guidance on what we should continue to do.” On the other side of the spectrum, school nurse Olesa Taylor works for Chicago International Charter Schools Avalon (CICS) and CICS Washington Park, both of which are public elementary schools. “We are still remote as of now,” Taylor said. “Only office staff and maintenance are allowed in the schools. We have to get our temperature taken, make sure we are symptom free and have to be cleared by our director of operations before we enter the building.”

The students are Taylor’s biggest concern now as many of them would like to be back in school. But she is glad she can still work and stay connected until then. “I’ve been able to keep in contact with a lot of students and parents throughout all of this,” Taylor said. The most challenging thing is talking to some kids who want to be back in school but can’t. They love having that interaction with their peers and teachers day to day. It’s disappointing to let them know that we aren’t ready to reopen yet.”

“[The pandemic] has changed what it means to be a nurse. It has elevated our strength, compassion, expertise and shown the world that nurses are instrumental not only in guiding a nation through a pandemic, but communities and hospitals would collapse without us.”

**Amy Isler, MSN, RN, CSN
writing for Nurse.org**



photo by Patrick Maxwell

When she is not helping students, school nurse Amanda Gaida works through another day’s pile of paperwork in her office. Gaida reports that the number of students testing positive for or in quarantine after exposure to COVID continues to drop since school began in August.

Now that vaccines are being made available to the masses, Gaida hopes that we will all be able to be together come next fall. “The vaccine is going to help,” Gaida said. “Wearing masks will most likely still be in effect. I do not know about having activities and sports, as it’s too soon to tell and depends on where we are next fall.” On the other hand, Taylor is not optimistic that they will all be in the building together by the start of next year. “I would hope that we would be back to normal but I don’t think it will happen,” Taylor said. “I’m thinking we may have reduced class sizes with a [certain amount of] kids on alternate days. ‘A’ class [one] day and ‘B’ class [another] day, with one day off.” Though the job has required school nurses throughout the world to put in a great deal of extra work since the pandemic hit, Gaida still enjoys her work. She encourages anyone interested in nursing to pursue it as a career. “[Nursing] is absolutely rewarding,” Gaida said. “Knowing you can make a difference is what gets you through.” She also wants the community to feel good about what we have accomplished, but urges everyone to stay the course. “It has been a school year we have never experienced before,” Gaida said. “Together, by doing our part, by following the guidelines set forth by the CDC, CDPH and IDPH, we have come so far. But we must keep moving forward and continue to follow the safety measures that are in place. I am so glad to be a part of the Marist community.”

Interested in a white collar job?



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The shops around the corner

supporting small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic



Tranquility Salon
9908 S. Walden Pkwy
773-298-8901

"I love the way the space looks, the ladies who work here and the way I look when I leave," Amy Kaskie (left) said. Kaskie is a regular at Tranquility. She appreciates that the salon is close to home and that it is owned and operated by women. Kaskie, a small business owner herself, describes the salon as an inspiring symbol of prosperity for the Beverly community. She remains comfortable in the knowledge that Tranquility is doing all it can to keep its customers safe...and looking great.



Two Mile Coffee Bar
9907 S. Walden Pkwy.
773-629-6001

"Honestly, when you come in here, the vibe is chill and cozy," barista Jana said of the daily atmosphere of her place of employment. For her, the appreciative, relaxed and cozy environment always makes coming into work worthwhile. Even during the pandemic and the cold weather this winter, the customers remain warm as they continue to come in for good conversation and even better coffee. Two Mile has a second location at the 95th Street Metra station but it is currently closed.

Matthew Warakomski
senior reporter and photographer

The small businesses in our community are something we all see, places we pass nearly every day. They exist all around us, but not everyone gives much thought to them. We often gloss over them in favor of larger retailers like Target or the convenience of online shopping on Amazon. But these local homes of hidden treasures and one-of-a-kind services actually employ 59.9 million Americans, or about 47.3 percent of the United States workforce, according to writers at the small business news website Small Business Trends.

These neighborhood cornerstones have been in trouble since the onset of COVID-19. According to economists working on Yelp's Local Economic Impact Report, a total of 163,735 small businesses have closed since August 21, 2020, 97,966 of them permanently. Heather Long of the Washington Post writes that such a loss of employment has not been seen since the Great Depression.

The small businesses that remain are hanging in there, trying to hold fast to what they represent—not just to the communities they serve but to their employees as well.

Small businesses are neighborhood beacons, places where one can get together with friends and neighbors. Small businesses can be an escape during times of stress and works of art to be admired. Without them, the communities they serve would lose their vibrant color, drying up like a raisin under the beating sun. They give us a reminder of what life was like before the pandemic.

A small business is someone's dream that touches us all and puts a bit of spice in our reality.

So let's take a virtual walk and visit some of the small businesses I visited last month in Beverly.



Root Consignment Company
1913 W. 103rd St.
773-980-1800

Angela Samila (right) has run Root since 2013. Since then, she and her daughter Zoe (left) have welcomed hundreds of customers who visit to view their wide array of previously-owned items, ranging from household goods to furniture. Samila loves to create and often rearranges her showroom like a sculpture with moving parts. The store provides an outlet for her creative drive and grounds her. She feels useful in a time when people are struggling and happy to give them some hope and happiness.



Calabria Imports
1905 W. 103rd St.
773-396-5800

The word 'fortunate' is not one that most would use with regard to the pandemic. However, Pasquale "Pat" Roberto, owner of Calabria, says he's been fortunate and teamwork, positivity and innovation still run supreme in his restaurant and delicatessen. "I've hit rock bottom and had to work myself back up," Roberto said. "What got me back up was positivity. Surround yourself with positive people because they're going to help you through hard times."

Senior RedHawks commit to college sports careers

PJ Cunningham
senior reporter

Homecomings, touchdowns, buzzer-beaters, state championships, Cinderella stories, passion and pride.

These are all words that conjure up images of high school sports, which include the hopes, dreams and passions of millions of young athletes across the country.

When IHSA sports were cancelled in the spring of 2020 in response to a spike COVID-19 cases, it kicked off a chain reaction of postponements, audibles and cancellations that turned the Illinois high school sports universe on its head.

Despite high school sports being halted, college sports recruiting went on, and RedHawk seniors were not left behind.

“Sadly, there is no doubt that the cancellation and postponement of high school athletics in Illinois has negatively impacted college coaches’ ability to evaluate student-athletes throughout the state,” Athletic Director Eric Simpson said.

Despite the many challenges posed by the pandemic however, the RedHawk Athletic Dept. has been busy, with 21 senior athletes signing at three separate in-person events so far this year, and at least one more planned for later this year.

While many celebratory events have been forced onto virtual media platforms, the RedHawk seniors who committed were able to have in-person signing days held in accordance with all local and federal COVID-19 mitigation guidelines.

“We had initially planned virtual signing day ceremonies, but members of the Marist

community stressed the importance of an in-person event in order to recognize the accomplishments of our college-bound athletes,” Simpson said. “As a result, we have hosted three successful in-person events thus far. We look forward to hosting another signing day ceremony later this year.”

Simpson believes that having such a large number of college-bound athletes, especially during a pandemic, is a testament to both the RedHawk athletic programs and the individual athletes. Simpson is especially proud of the guest speaker program initiated to help keep student athletes motivated.

“During the forced pause, we initiated this program to encourage students to reflect on the ways in which their athletic experience can support their personal growth and future endeavors. In December, Major Charles Broun of the Marines addressed senior athletes on the topic of resiliency in the face of adversity. Our basketball players participated in a question and answer session with Chicago native and NBA official Marc Davis, who addressed topics ranging from communication between players and coaches, life in the NBA bubble and his personal path to the top of his profession.”

Senior football player Patrick Coogan, a nationally-ranked lineman who signed with Notre Dame, is grateful for the lessons he learned as a RedHawk before and during the pandemic.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without Marist. I’ve learned so many lessons during the past four years that I know will help me at Notre Dame and beyond.”



photo by Grace Molenhouse

Football players who signed with their respective universities on Feb. 3 include (L to R) Seamus Kelly (University of Chicago), DeAndre Archer (Grand Valley State), Santonien Flowers (Indianapolis), Quintin Knight (Upper Iowa), pictured here with head football coach Ron Dawczak in the Red and White Gym.

For senior volleyball player Ewelina Gacek, her commitment to George Mason University was as much about excellence in the classroom as on the volleyball court.

“Athletically, the coach and team atmosphere were huge for me,” Gacek said. “However, I always looked for a school where I would excel academically. Mason has really strong programs for my major that will eventually send me on the path towards my dream career of being a lawyer.”

The recent announcement that IHSA-sponsored sports including basketball, baseball and football will be returning this spring, means that at least some senior athletes will get one last chance to suit up in red and white.

“This is our last season,” senior baseball player and Flagler College signee Jonny Crowell said. “We want to make the most of it, guide the younger players who are the future of the program and, most importantly, we want to win.”

Sports writer shares advice with RedHawk football program

Isabella Schreck
senior reporter

Matt Fortuna, a college football writer for The Athletic, spoke to the players and coaches in the RedHawk football program during a Zoom conference televised in the Red and White Gym on Jan. 28.

Fortuna shared his experience in sports journalism, challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and his advice for the team’s upcoming and abbreviated season.

He attended Xavier High School in New York. Xavier was founded in 1847 and is overseen by the Society of Jesus, a Catholic order. NBC Today Show host and broadcast legend Al Roker is among Xavier’s prestigious alumni.

Fortuna then attended Penn State, graduating in 2011 with a degree in journalism.

After college, he covered college football for ESPN before going to work for The Athletic, a subscription-based sports website that provides advertising-free national and local sports coverage in 47 North American cities and the United Kingdom.

“All my success comes back to my time in Catholic education, whether it was my experience on the school paper, basketball team or the friends and bonds I made,” Fortuna said. “Now, I have a job where I still pinch myself because I get paid to go to games and interview coaches and athletes. I love it, and I found that the old cliché, ‘if you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life,’ is true.”

Fortuna shared the experiences he misses most since the pandemic began.

“I found that the old cliché, ‘if you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life,’ is true.”

“I miss going to games and networking and traveling,” Fortuna said. “Every single field for college football is different and unique for entirely different reasons, which is what I miss most about the games.”

Fortuna also spoke to the program about the importance of working hard during their newly-announced season.

“Take advantage of the opportunities you are getting, especially now as you get a chance to play football this season,” Fortuna said. “Although it’s not pretty to go through what you are going through, you’re going to have a tremendous advantage over all your competitors in the real world because you are forced to deal with adversity.”

The IHSA announced on Jan. 27 that football programs can begin practicing on March 3. Games will begin on March 19 and end on April 24, with no playoffs.

Varsity defensive back junior Tyler O’Brochta looks forward to returning.

“It will be awesome to have the football atmosphere back because it has been very dull without knowing if we will have a season,” O’Brochta said. “Now that we have confirmation that we will be able to play, our entire team spirit is up.”

Varsity center senior Jack Harmon agrees with O’Brochta and believes that his team learned a great deal from Fortuna.



photo by Isabella Schreck

Matt Fortuna speaks on Jan. 28 to the football players over Zoom about his experiences as a sportswriter and his advice for their upcoming season. The team will begin practicing on March 3, with games starting March 19.

“The way he talked about facing adversity will definitely help us,” Harmon said. “He gave us great ideas about how to make the most of our final season.”

Fortuna also gave advice on maintaining a balance between sports and time off the field.

“You must protect your mental health and make decisions that are best for you,” Fortuna said. “But you must remember to be professional and courteous. You never know who will be there to catch you when you fall in life.”

In conclusion, Fortuna spoke to the program’s seniors who will be entering college and then the work force about the importance of versatility.

“The best ability is availability,” Fortuna said. “I spent my entire career covering college football, but I knew very little about it before college, so you need to be adaptable. My job is taking me places I never thought I could go before professionally. You need to be flexible, and you need to be willing to do anything, with respect to yourself and your time.”