



From John Scimeca, Dean of Students 2019 in Review, A Brief Look Ahead

In the calendar year of 2019, St. Michael students showcased their many different abilities, passions, and extracurricular interests outside of the classroom.

- In January, more than 100 students participated in the national “March for Life” event in Washington, D.C. to protest the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legally allows abortion. As a school, St. Michael sent two buses full of students, faculty chaperones (including Father Victor Ingalls as chaplain) and spent several days at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Olney, Maryland while participating in the March and seeing other sights around the area, such as George Washington’s Mount Vernon home. Additional St. Michael students attended the March with other Catholic parish youth groups in Baldwin County.
- Students had the chance to participate in quirky events such “Fun Sock Fridays in February” or in Mu Alpha Theta’s “Pi Day” on March 14th, when many pies are baked and consumed by St. Michael students. In addition, several assemblies were spent in competitions ranging from marshmallow eating and “Giants, Wizards, & Elves” to basketball knockout and music trivia.
- Our Campus Ministry team continued to host weekend retreats for boys and girls each semester, meeting in locations at Blakeley State Park or along Mobile Bay in Fairhope. They assisted in putting on weekly school Mass and a penance service each semester. They do a great job!
- The inaugural Talent Show, organized by our House Council, took place last spring and featured many of our students’ talents as musicians, whether playing an instrument or singing. Marc Nyantaski won the event, rapping out “I’m a Christian..”
- Current senior Katherine Hewlett won the third annual school March Madness competition. Out of 107 entries, she was the only person to correctly predict both Virginia and Texas Tech to make the final, with the Cavaliers winning the title.
- Our House Council (student government) and a few faculty members helped put on an entertaining and down-to-the-wire House competition, culminating with the year-end House Cup. Students participated throughout the year as members of Allen, O’Sullivan, Portier, and Quinlan. Last May, House O’Sullivan won its first House Cup after an exciting afternoon of relay races, kickball, ultimate frisbee, and song identification.

- Our first graduation, in May of 2019, was a special night. We said good-bye to 46 graduates. They accumulated over 4.1 million dollars in scholarship offers, with just over 70% of the class earning scholarships. (Our College Counselor, Dr. Keith Lindley, does a great job helping students with scholarships and college admittances!) Caroline Zitnik was our valedictorian, and committed to the University of Notre Dame. Two young men, Griffin Mahoney and Hunter Williams, our co-salutatorians, committed to the seminary for the Archdiocese. There were ten “St. Michael Scholars” (3.8 weighted GPA or higher, 4 or more A.P. classes, 3 or more years of languages): Luke Bosarge, Stirling Faulkner, Virginia Hannahan, Maggie Lollis, Griffin Mahoney, Ryan Russo, Alexander Vick, Gia Vollmer, Hunter Williams and Caroline Zitnik. The class of 2019, the first, left a great legacy here.
- We elected new House Council members for 2019: Noah Nelson as president, Andrés Christensen as vice president, and Andrew Fouty as sacristan. The four House presidents are LG Drago (Quinlan), Hannah Gay (O’Sullivan), Fairby Caldwell (Portier), and Hayden Northcutt (Allen). These students meet weekly and plan school events, such as the fall Homecoming Dance, the “Coming Home” events in the winter, and Prom.
- Many students have participated in acts of service this past year. Our school community collected money for a baby bottle fundraiser, benefiting Mary’s Shelter in Elberta for homeless, pregnant women. In the fall, we packed 82 total Boxes of Joy (consisting of kids toys, art supplies, and clothes) through Cross Catholic Outreach. Each winter, we participate in “Canned Food Sculpture Contest,” in which House attempts to collect the most canned food items to donate to a local Baldwin County Catholic parish.
- Our students in the Fine Arts programs continue to display their abilities, whether it is the Band and Choral Concerts or the annual Senior Art Show. Our band and choral students have also performed at several events, including Archdiocesan-sponsored Masses at the Cathedral. Our Choral program rated “superior” in state competition in the spring, and our band program rated “excellent. In addition, several St. Michael students this fall advanced to the state level of competition for the 2019 Trumbauer Festival for the Alabama Conference of Theatre.
- Our many clubs continue to be active through 2019. Health and Wellness Club promotes awareness of good nutrition and less daily stress. Key Club helps sponsor events like the Boxes of Joy, among other things. Peer Helpers, led by our counselor Mrs. Calvery, provide important emotional and academic support for their classmates at St. Michael. The Pro-Life Club helps fundraise for pro-life causes and attends the March for Life each January, and the Environmental Club continues to coordinate school-wide recycling and overall awareness. Spanish Club, in addition to the competitive side (they have won numerous state awards at the yearly Alabama competition in the spring), puts on fun dancing, culinary, and informative events. Model U.N. joined the ranks this fall, and has already hosted its first competition. They will take a delegation to the University of Alabama this coming spring

In 2020, my priority will be to look for ways to deepen the St. Michael experience for our students, both during the day, and very importantly, what happens after school.

We are committed to the idea that EVERY student should be actively involved in at least one extra curricular club! I'll be auditing that this Spring, talking to students who are not involved. Where there appear to be gaps in our offerings, I will work with our principal, as we prepare for next year, to close them. Involved kids are happier, more connected, and do better in their studies as a result. We want that for each student here!