



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

LIFETIME LIONS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER - FALL 2020



Dear Alumni and Alumni Families: As we move into the second quarter of the 2020-21 school year, I'd like to take this opportunity to bring you up-to-date on St. Mark's successful reopening during the pandemic.

The school reopened on August 19, offering both on-campus and off-campus learning options for our students. About 25% of the student body opted for off-campus learning, while the remaining 75% made the decision to attend school in person each day. At the start of the second quarter, about 20% of the off-campus students returned for in-person learning.

I am pleased to report that the health and safety protocols we have in place are working. Wearing face masks, maintaining social distancing, washing hands, and other measures have proven to be the keys to reopening safely. We are extremely impressed by how quickly our students (even our preschool students) adopted the new health and safety protocols and put them into action. They have now become second nature.

Students still attend all of their core subject and "specials" classes; the only difference is that most of the teachers go to them. Students still engage in group projects, just with a little more distance between them. Students still enjoy lunch from the Cafeteria (including the ever-popular Pizza Day!); it's just delivered to the

classroom in a covered container. Students still attend daily recess and P.E.; it's just divided by grade or class. School sports and most extra-curricular activities have been canceled for the time being, which of course we miss, but it's been a small price to pay to have our community learning and growing together again.

Even though we are unable to have visitors inside our buildings for now, we're finding new ways to welcome them to our campus, from virtual Classroom Readers to virtual Parent Teacher Conferences. We even have a new "[Virtual School Tour](#)" that is available on our website for prospective families (or alumni who are simply curious about how the campus looks today). And you'll see below how one of our alums found a way to share her passion with our students on campus in a safe way.

St. Mark also continues to remain on the cutting edge of new technology. The latest addition to our campus is an autonomous cleaning robot that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to clean the school floors. We are the only K-12 school in the nation to have this technology. We bet you didn't know that a floor cleaner could serve both our maintenance needs and our curriculum. Read on for details.

As always, we're happy to share examples of how our alumni are shining during this time. See below for a recent update.

We pray that you and your families are well, and we look forward to the day when we can see you back on campus. As always, our in boxes and phone lines are open if you have any questions or ideas to share.

Happy fall,



Patricia Opon
Principal
patricia.opon@stmcs.net

P.S. Don't see your accomplishment in this newsletter? Please send it to debbie.reed@stmcs.net. We'll include it in the next edition.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Marti F. '17, a senior at John Paul II High School, was recognized as a National Merit Commended Scholar, representing the top 3% of scores on the PSAT.

Sam D. '16, **Antonio M. '16** and **Cal T. '16**, all 2020 graduates of Jesuit Dallas, were recognized as National AP Scholars by earning a score of 4+ on eight or more AP exams during their high school careers.

Peter N. '17 and **Emilio R. '17**, seniors at Jesuit Dallas, were recognized as AP Scholars With Honor, scoring a 3.25+ on four or more AP exams. **Emilio** was also recognized as a National Hispanic Scholar representing the top 2% of Hispanic/Latino student scores on the PSAT.

Zosia S. '17, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, was recognized as an AP Scholar. This distinction is granted to students who receive scores of 3+ on three or more AP Exams.

Jesuit Dallas students **Harrison K. '17** (senior) and **Jake R. '18** (junior) were selected to serve on the 2020-21 Congressional Youth Advisory Council for Congressman Van Taylor in the Third Congressional District of Texas. CYAC is a leadership and interactive learning opportunity for high school students where they learn about the federal government, discuss public policy and local issues, and work with federal representatives and congressional staff while serving their community.



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LIONS MENTOR
LIONS

Giselle H. '18, a junior at Bishop Lynch High School, was recently inducted into the Spanish National Honor Society.

Maria I. '18, a junior at John Paul II High School, achieved "Plata Level" on the National Spanish Exam.

Kennedy G. '17, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, participated in a dialog training workshop offered by BL in conjunction with the Essential Partners organization. The sessions focused on helping student leaders learn to express their opinions and hear differing opinions while engaging one another in a respectful manner. Student leaders, in turn, coach other students on campus in these real-world conversational and connectivity skills.

Sean G. '12, a graduate of John Paul II High School, graduated from Tulane University in May 2020 with a double major in Political Science (International Relations) and Anthropology. He also received a minor in French and completed course work studying abroad in Paris. He began attending Tulane University Law School this fall.



Tessa T. '17, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, recently visited our Early Childhood students, along with her longhorn and bull calf. Students got to pet the calf and learned all about longhorns, including what they like to eat (did you know they love sweets?). Thanks, Tessa, for sharing your knowledge and your passion for animals with our students!

REMEMBER WHEN

Several St. Mark alumnae had works published in the 2020 issue of *Esse*, Ursuline Academy of Dallas' award-winning magazine: **Sarah H. '16**-prose entitled "Pura Vida," poetry entitled "Ordinary Trancendence" and "A Blue Wave as a Golden Moment"; **Vivian N. '17**-digital photography entitled "10:00 PM," painting entitled "Dude, Just Let Me In," drawing entitled "Could It Be Self Love?," ceramics entitled "Wither Flower"; **Anupa M. '18**-digital photography entitled "Pre-Quarantine"; **Genevieve B. '19**-digital photography entitled "Morning Bloom" (pictured below). **Sarah H. '16** also served as *Esse's* Copy Editor, and **Joann N. '16** and **Sona S. '17** served on the Selection Committee. [Read Esse here.](#)



Biya C. '19, a sophomore at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, was one of 100 high school students around the world selected to participate in Stanford University's Asian Liver Center's 18th annual Youth Leadership Conference on Asian and Pacific Islander Health. She worked with a team to come up with a possible campaign idea to raise awareness about Hepatitis B and to encourage people to get tested and vaccinated.

This week, the 8th grade class presented the Living Saints Museum for All Saints Day.

Remember when the Class of 2017 did the same?

Post your comments on the school's social media!



LIFETIME LIONS

Natalie J. '17 and **Marti F. '17**, seniors at John Paul II High School, were chosen to serve on the North Texas Food Bank Youth Advocacy Council for the 2020-21 school year. This opportunity engages dedicated and entrepreneurial high school students at the premiere hunger-relief organization in North Texas.

Taylor R. '20 was voted Freshman "Lady" on John Paul II High School's Homecoming Court.

Jenny C. '17, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, was named Captain of the Varsity Volleyball team, and was selected as one of ten nominees for Homecoming Queen.

Ben P. '20, a freshman at Jesuit Dallas, was recently named an "Offensive Player of the Week" for the Freshman Blue football team.

Zach V. '17 was named Captain of the Boys Cross Country team at John Paul II High School, and is a member of the Varsity Boys team that recently advanced to State with a 2nd Place finish at District.

John B. '20, a member of the John Paul II High School JV Boys Cross Country team placed 3rd at JV District.

Hannah B. '17 and **Natalie J. '17** were named Captains of the John Paul II High School Varsity Volleyball Team.

Tessa T. '17, a Bishop Lynch High School senior, won first place in the Wood Craft Division at the State Fair of Texas Creative Arts competition with a project she completed in BL's Sculpture II class.

Tom S. '04, a graduate of Jesuit Dallas, Texas Christian University and The University of Texas at Dallas, was recently featured on WFAA



LIFETIME LIONS

St. Mark alumni are invited to join Lifetime Lions, our official alumni network. Keep up with former classmates, become a mentor to current students, and learn about opportunities to earn high school service hours. [Click here to register.](#)

FAVORITE ST. MARK MEMORY



When registering for Lifetime Lions, you are asked to share your favorite St. Mark memories.

Julia R. '16 fondly remembers participating in volunteer activities. Monthly All-School Service projects are still part of the student experience. In

Channel 8 news. Tom is an Olympic hopeful in Karate as a member of Team USA, and continues to train for the 2021 games that were postponed due to the pandemic. [Watch the full report here.](#)



ST. MARK WELCOMES A NEW ADDITION TO THE STAFF - AN AI ROBOT

October, students made blankets for veterans at the VA Hospital.



STAY CONNECTED

Keep us posted! As we receive alumni updates, we incorporate them into our social media posts, weekly school bulletins and alumni communications. Tell us about your recent activities and accomplishments -- we'd love to hear from you!





Thanks to the generosity of Get Clean Services LLC on behalf of school parent, Charles Herrera, St. Mark welcomed a new addition to the staff. It's an artificial intelligence floor scrubber robot that helps to keep our campus healthy and safe during this time, and will continue to do so in the future. But that is just the beginning. It also frees our maintenance staff to implement other important hygiene measures like frequently cleaning high-touch surfaces, and it presents an opportunity to incorporate the robot's AI technology into our STEAM programming for students. Students will see a robot and AI technology in action firsthand, the Robotics team will learn to program it, and they may even see an appearance at a future pep rally including a pre-programmed dance routine (post-COVID of course)!

Need to update your contact information? Simply send an email to [Debbie Reed](#) with all of your updates.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR ST. MARK?



St. Mark Catholic School appreciates your support.

If you would like to donate time, expertise, or financial support, please follow the links below.

*Donate your time or expertise. Simply email [Debbie Reed](#) and let us know what you are interested in contributing.

*[Financial Assistance Fund](#) - Provides immediate financial assistance to qualified school families, helping them to meet their tuition commitments during the coronavirus pandemic.

Early Childhood Assistant Principal, Sarah Peralta, created an amazing lion costume for the robot to "bring it to life" for our students.

We recently held a naming contest, and students chose LEO, which stands for "Love Each Other," a fitting name for our newest "lion," given that we continue to emphasize that implementing COVID health and safety protocols equates to spreading love and kindness in our community.

St. Mark is the first K-12 school in the United States to benefit from this technology, placing the school in the company of Walmart and other major retailers. In addition, St. Mark will be the subject of a case study where Get Clean Services will monitor the robot's effectiveness in a school setting, as well as its use as an educational tool.

ONCE A LION, ALWAYS A LION



*[Gap Fund](#) - Helps St. Mark bridge the gap between the tuition amount our families pay, and the actual cost to educate each student. For 2020-21, that cost is \$1,167 per student.

*[Technology Fund](#) - Assists St. Mark with keeping current on the technology made available to our students.

*[Other Monetary Donations](#) - Make a general donation, or designate funds towards a specific program such as Fine Arts, Athletics, or Robotics.

*[Legacy Brick](#) - Commemorate your time as a LION. Buy a personalized brick for \$100 that will become part of the entryway to St. Mark Catholic School.

*[Merchant Programs](#) - Raise funds for the school simply by linking your shopper card to St. Mark.

QUICK LINKS

[Calendar](#)
[Lifetime Lions Alumni](#)
[Admissions](#)
[Safe Environment](#)
[Lion's Den Spirit Store](#)

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