

SPRING 2021 ISSUE

CRUSADER CONNECTION

Notre Dame High School's
Alumni Newsletter

WELCOME HOME MS. MACK!



As a 1985 graduate of Notre Dame High School, I remember fondly the spirit of community, friendship, service, and faith. When the opportunity to lead my Alma Mater emerged last fall, I began to reflect on my personal and professional desires. I quickly became excited about the opportunity to come back and serve the community that truly shaped me into who I am as a person and an educator. I began to talk with old friends, families with current students at Notre Dame, and rediscovered the traditions that are still alive within the community. It was through this personal reflection, as well as conversations with the community, that I knew I wanted this opportunity!

In my 22 years as a special education teacher, I consistently valued the relationships that I built with my students and their families. I always attributed this to the sense of community and belonging I felt as an ND student. As I began to lead groups of teachers and students, this idea of positive relationship building was at the forefront of all my work. I then became a servant leader in public and charter schools. It was imperative that equitable education, with opportunities provided for every student, was at the center of each decision made. There was always something missing though....FAITH. The desire to improve students' lives by allowing them equitable opportunities, not just academics, became difficult without being able to discuss the belief in a higher power. For me, it was the part that was missing in all of my work that could have made a difference in the lives of so many students and their families. I am blessed in knowing that my faith afforded me the opportunity and desire to serve students with disabilities and families living in poverty, as well as, lead teams of teachers in improving academic instruction.

Who I am is a direct result of my childhood and teenage experiences. Being a student at Notre Dame allowed me to take what I had experienced and put it to work for 31 years. Now I am back. My desire is to instill in both teachers and students that same sense of
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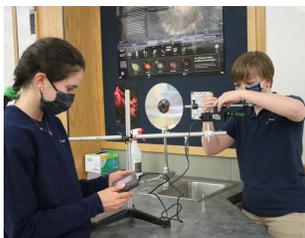
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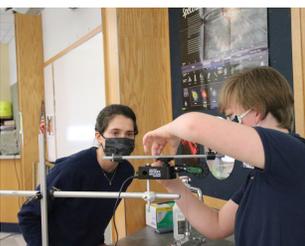
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STUDENT LIFE



The Notre Dame Science Department is grateful for a generous anonymous donation that is being used to enhance the experiences of our students in our Physics and Chemistry courses.



This donation enabled us to purchase digital data probes for both subjects that will be used with our current technology of hand-held Vernier LabQuest Digital Data Acquisition Modules. The Vernier system is used in many high school and college labs as a way to give students tools to collect and analyze all kinds of data in the lab setting. Probes that measure pH and help analyze visible spectra will be a great addition to our Chemistry Lab. In Physics, this donation will be used to purchase Vernier equipment to use with labs that are part of the AP Physics 1 and AP Physics 2 curricula, including rotary motion sensors and a diffraction apparatus. This equipment will be especially helpful as we develop the lab component of these newly certified college-level courses.

Juniors Riley Soehnlein (right) & Emmalie Barkley (left)

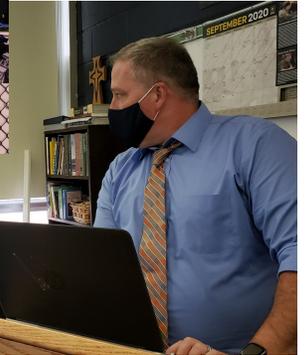
We are so blessed to have this generous donation to support us in our mission to provide excellent and technology-rich experiences for our science students!

SCIENCE NEWS

Biotechnology is a new, one-semester science elective at Notre Dame High School. The goal of this course is to allow students to engage in project-based learning activities to explore the use of genetic screening in a wide variety of disciplines, such as public health, forensics, agriculture, and population genetics. The equipment and supplies to run the course were purchased through a Toshiba America Grant. This equipment will be used to enrich the laboratory experience in additional science courses, as well.



PHOTO GALLERY



Seniors from the football team spent some time with retired Coach Mike D'Aloisio before their last football game at Notre Dame. They sat in Joel Stephens Park, sharing laughs & memories. They listened as Coach reminded them that they will always be family, no matter where they go after they leave ND. The Notre Dame family is so grateful for all of the encouragement, inspiration, and love that Coach D has given to his teams over the years. Sharing his love of the game & all things Notre Dame, the faith that he exhibits & the example he sets have been priceless. We will all be forever changed for the better. Thank you for everything Coach!

Left to right: Jack Holleran, Daniel Ruppenthal, Coach Mike D'Aloisio, Luke Vieira, Anthony Tota



PERSPECTIVES



by Cameron Neidrich. 9th grade

The 2020-2021 school year at Notre Dame has been very different compared to past years. For instance, students do not have a locker to store their belongings during the day, so everyone has to carry their backpacks around to all of their classes. This also means that there is no longer an opportunity in the morning to talk to friends while everyone is at their locker getting ready for the day, but homeroom makes up for that! All of our desks and chairs are separated by 6 feet to socially distance and in the auditorium, seats are marked to signify where people can and cannot sit. Masks are required to be worn all day, except for lunch so that we can eat! Also, sports have had a significant delay in that they have only recently started. Other extra-curriculars such as Senior Robotics have been completely online. The one exception is driver meetings where, due to restrictions on large crowds, only a limited number of members are allowed to attend. The Junior Robotics group has been able to meet in person just in the last couple of months. These are just some of the many things that are different this year.



by Pratha Purushottam, 12th grade

"Unprecedented" is a word we have all heard countless times over the past year, and for good reason, because if I had to choose one word to describe my senior year, it would certainly be that. The jumps from in-person learning to online, hardly seeing our friends, and the cancellation of many anticipated events have culminated into an experience my peers and I could have never imagined. Every aspect of our lives have been altered due to the pandemic, and I'm grateful to have had some normalcy by being able to physically go to school, unlike many of those in public schools or living in bigger cities. In September, it was amazing to be back in-person after not seeing the familiar halls of Notre Dame for six

months. Having to wear masks and stay socially distant felt unusual, but it was a small price to pay for being back in school. After just six weeks, we were back online. The transition was smooth, as we had already experienced online learning, but besides getting to wake up five minutes before class, I missed being in school. As COVID cases decreased across the county, we came back in person after three months and all has been going well so far!

While being in school is always preferable, there are certain advantages to the age of online learning. Due to teachers becoming acclimated to teaching through Zoom, I had the opportunity to take AP Statistics and AP Calculus online, freeing up my schedule. This enabled me to take Art and Public Speaking, two electives that I really enjoy. In addition, students can now meet with their teachers online if they need help, from the comfort of their own home.

The college application process, a large aspect of senior year, has also been greatly impacted due to COVID-19. Many colleges went test-optional, meaning the SAT/ACT were not required. Personally, I was at a slight disadvantage, having taken the SAT but not having my score considered at all at some colleges. Overall, the process went smoothly with the help of my guidance counselor and teachers, and I am so excited to attend college next year. While COVID has flipped all of our worlds upside down, it gives us things to look forward to as we return to a new normal. As I come to the end of my time at Notre Dame, I cannot wait to see what the future holds!



SPIRIT WEEK & HOMECOMING



Homecoming court (left to right) - Ellie Mustico with Steven Gough, Pratha Purushottam with Brandon Hibbard, Kathryn Gough with Owen Spring, Maddie Watts with Grant Crossley

Homecoming Queen Pratha Purushottam escorted by Brandon Hibbard



ATHLETIC UPDATE



by Max Young, Athletic Manager

It has been my pleasure to step into the role of Athletic Manager at Notre Dame. I am proud to say we have been able to return many of our student-athletes to competition. This past winter, ND had the only indoor track team in Chemung County able to do in-person track meets. I am also proud that we were able to have our basketball teams compete, despite being categorized as a high-risk sport. We have enjoyed watching our bowling teams compete virtually, something unheard of prior to the pandemic. During the winter season, three ND teams were recognized for the NYS Scholar Athlete awards - Girls Indoor Track, Girls Basketball, & Girls Bowling.

The Fall 2 season has seen a welcome return of spectators to our games, bring a sense of normalcy back to athletics. ND was pleased to host the annual Homecoming game vs Edison; watching the Homecoming court walk onto the field at halftime was great for our Notre Dame community. We saw our Cross Country teams, Girls Swim team & Girls Soccer team reach postseason play. The Fall 2 season also provided one of the most memorable senior nights in recent history for our Boys Soccer team, whose contest was interrupted in the second half by a snow squall, forcing us to end the game with just over 31 minutes remaining to be played. Even with all of the restrictions, our students have stated they are just happy to be competing and representing our school. I cannot thank enough all of the people involved in making these games & the consolidated seasons possible. Our spring season coaches are working hard to make their seasons great for their players & I am looking forward to watching them play. Watching these kids doing what they love is what makes sports, and my job, so special.



ON THE STAGE



by Cody Riker, Theater Director

This past year has been one of great change and reinventing the wheel. Covid-19 has affected everything and the world of theater has been no exception. The Notre Dame Theater Department has had to pivot our normal season and I'm extremely proud of the work we have been able to accomplish.

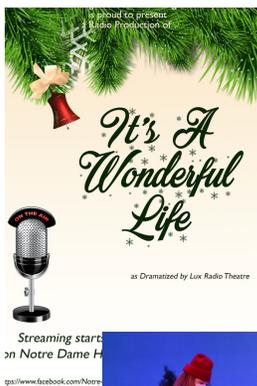
In the fall, classes were being held online and many thought producing a show would be impossible. We decided to attempt an online production via Google Meet. We needed a show about hope and so, selected the radio theater production of *It's a Wonderful Life*. With a large cast of actors from grades seven through twelve, we performed with the intent of not

only entertaining but inspiring hope. The production was edited and sound effects and music were added postproduction. Ultimately, it was extremely successful and allowed us to find a new way to keep theater alive during this troubling time.

After a hiatus for winter break, school returned to in-person and discussions began about the possibility of a live production. After researching multiple shows, the decision was made to perform the play *Almost, Maine* by John Cariani. The play revolves around the residents of a small town as they deal with hope, love, loss, and finding themselves in a time that is uncertain. Since the production is made up of two-person scenes it was an obvious choice that would work for our Covid theater format.

A plan was developed to film each scene individually and edit them together since an audience did not seem likely. But, through diligent work and many phone calls, we were approved to perform live for a small group of families and invited guests! Rehearsals went into overdrive; conducted socially distant on the stage, with all performers masked. The night of the show required socially distanced seating and other precautions for our audience. Ultimately, there was only one thing that mattered - live theater was back and being performed on the Notre Dame stage!! Our production of *Almost, Maine* can be viewed online via the Notre Dame Facebook page.

The Notre Dame 20-21 theater season was successful and allowed for us to not only flex our acting muscles but our creative muscles as well. Theater happened this year and I am eternally grateful. Thank you to our graduating seniors who worked extremely hard and performed beautifully! And thank you to all of you for supporting theater at Notre Dame!



ALUMNI CORNER



by Eileen McCarthy Ruppenthal'81, Business & Alumni Relations Coordinator

Hello Crusaders! For many of you, it may have been a long time since you thought of yourself in that way, for others only a short while. The years pass so quickly, yet the memories and the nostalgia can take you right back to the hallways of Notre Dame. No matter how much time has passed, the adage holds true - once a Crusader, always a Crusader.

I have recently returned to ND as the Business & Alumni Relations Coordinator and while it has been many years since I walked these halls as a student, the ND esprit de corps is alive & well! Although I find it hard to comprehend that I have been out of high school for 40 years (how is that possible?!), the Crusader feelings of pride, enthusiasm and shared community are still

clearly evident from the first minute you walk through the doors. And I'm also slightly convinced that I saw Sister Joachim standing in the hall outside of her room, where my locker was, but that's a story for another time!

As an alumna, I recognize and appreciate the significant impact that Notre Dame has had on me and the life I have been blessed to have. While I may not have fully appreciated it at the time, the foundation provided by Notre Dame has contributed to how I view the world and my place in it. The examples of faith as shown by the Sisters of Mercy were recalled as difficulties and challenges have been faced and overcome. The lessons learned so many years ago have since compounded with life experiences to provide direction in navigating through daily life. Without realizing it, Notre Dame had become part of the fabric of my life and I expect yours as well.

I treasure the memories of those years and look back fondly on my time as a student here. As the parent of a current student and member of the Class of 2021, I pray that he will also carry with him all of the lessons learned as he moves through life, enjoying similarly fond memories when he recalls his days at the school. Just as I hope that each of you shares in the nostalgia when thinking back to your high school days.

As Alumni Relations Coordinator, it is my goal to bring those memories to life for all of our graduates. I am pleased to share that Notre Dame will be refocusing efforts on maintaining communication with alumni through various avenues, including publications, events, social media, etc. You will be kept up to date on all of the exciting things your classmates are doing across the country and the world. We are expanding services offered to alumni, including assistance with reunion planning. We want to welcome you home with events specific to alumni. Once a Crusader, always a Crusader.

We have a lot of exciting things planned for you, starting with a celebration of Notre Dame's 65th anniversary on the weekend of September 17-19, 2021. Please mark your calendars and save those dates, details will be released soon! We look forward to seeing you and welcoming you home!

In our motto, *Ego Sum Lux Mundi*, Eileen

Keeping Track

Share your news & life events with your classmates!

Please send updates to Eileen McCarthy Ruppenthal'81 at ruppenthale@notredamehighschool.com

We hope to hear from you soon! Thank you!

Alumni Endowment

CAROL TOTA NITSCHÉ NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1960 ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP



Carol Tota Nitsche, a graduate of Notre Dame's class of 1960, sadly passed away on March 1, 2021. She was a gifted elementary and secondary school teacher of mathematics who held the distinction of being the second female to receive an MBA from the University of Maryland. Carol was very interested in encouraging female participation in business, math, and finance.

A scholarship in honor of Carol Tota Nitsche has been endowed by her husband, Jude Nitsche. The criterion for the scholarship is an incoming female freshman that excels in math and has a financial need.

If you are interested in contributing to this scholarship, please be sure to note Carol Tota Nitsche on your gift.



Are you an Amazon shopper?

You can donate to Notre Dame while using the Amazon app, at no extra cost to you!

Thank you!!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR ND
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You Shop. Amazon Gives.
Want to help make a difference while you shop in the Amazon App, at no extra cost to you?

Simply follow the instructions below to select "Notre Dame High School" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile in the app. They'll donate a portion of your eligible mobile app purchases to Notre Dame.

How it works:

1. Open the Amazon app on your phone
2. Select the main menu (+) & tap on "AmazonSmile" with Programs & Features
3. Select "Notre Dame High School" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app

Register with *amazon smile* and make your dollars do good for ND!

CLASS REUNIONS

CLASS OF 1961

DATE: Thursday, August 19, 2021

TIME: 12:00 pm

PLACE: Tag's, Route 352, Big Flats, NY

CONTACT: Mary Fran (Rodzai) & Dennis O'Herron -
maryfranoh@rochester.rr.com
Emily Sira - emilysira@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1971

DATE: Saturday, July 31, 2021

TIME: 2:00 pm - until

PLACE: "Moondance", 9620 Silsbee Road, Hammondsport, NY

CONTACT: Tom Kelly - tkelly1121@gmail.com

Your attendance is requested!!! There will be food, fun, refreshments, and lodging for the night if desired. Pet friendly. RSVP & questions via email, with the number attending, please.

PLANNING YOUR REUNION?

If your class has a reunion coming up, please contact Eileen McCarthy Ruppenthal'81 at ruppenthale@notredamehighschool.com to share your plans, schedule a school tour, request a class list, or for any other assistance you may need.

UPCOMING EVENTS

<p>Notre Dame HIGH SCHOOL</p> <hr/> <p>2021 Crusader Classic</p> <hr/> <p>MARK TWAIN GOLF COURSE Saturday, June 12th Shotgun Start at 9:00AM</p>	
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We are delighted to announce the return of the Crusader Classic Golf Tournament!!!
If you have any items you would like to donate for our raffle and/or silent auction, please contact
Theresa Tobey at tobeyt@notredamehighschool.com
For registration and sponsorship opportunities, click [here](#)



CONGRATULATIONS!!

The Class of 2021 will soon earn the status of alumni!!!
Baccalaureate service Thursday, June 17, 2021
Graduation ceremony Friday, June 18, 2021



SAVE THE DATE!!

Notre Dame High School will be celebrating our 65th anniversary the weekend of
September 17 - 19, 2021
We have a full weekend of events planned for you, please save the date & make plans to
come home and celebrate with us!!
Watch for more details to be announced soon!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT EMERITA



by Sister Mary Walter Hickey, RSM

Sometimes we are tested. Not to show our weaknesses, but to discover our strengths

We have been tested and we survived. We have shown our strength living through 2020, the year of the COVID 19 Pandemic, and a year of harsh realities. Our hope is that we find 2021 as a year of new beginnings.

During the pandemic, our teachers have discovered unknown strengths and have become our true HEROS by providing safe and effective online and in-person learning opportunities. They have maintained health protocols, kept social distance, worn masks and washed their hands regularly. While we were in the Orange Zone, from October until February, and in-school classes were canceled ZOOM became their favorite tool. They continued to create a vibrant, tangible place with connections and creativity, striving for a hopeful future.

Our teachers' words and actions have inspired our students to understand, to grow, and to embrace the ideals of service. Our students have shown an understanding of those suffering from COVID and of the Pandemic. They were more than generous at Christmas and despite missing the Annual Golden Mass many families in Elmira celebrated the Holy Day with much food and many gifts. The Senior Class spearheaded a canned food drive in February and the First Presbyterian Church received a busload of goods for those in need. Recently, Mrs. Ryan's 7th and 8th grade Theology students worked on the corporal works of Mercy making chili, mac and cheese, and baked ziti with meat sauce for the hungry and no-sew blankets for the cold and homeless.

Our Notre Dame students brought love, joy, and consolation. They brought hope and a new beginning to those in need. May the Blessings of the Risen Lord be with you and your family. May hope linger in your hearts forever.



WELCOME HOME MS. MACK (continued from page 1)

community and servitude all based on the faith and personal relationship they have with God. Providing a solid academic foundation, coupled with positive relationships and service to others rooted in faith, is my hope for every member of the Notre Dame family.

In my first three months here I have spent time observing, listening, and building relationships with staff, students, and families. I am excited to bring my experiences and take Notre Dame into the future. I do feel it necessary to thank all members of the Notre Dame faculty and staff for welcoming me and allowing me the time to digest what makes ND the BEST place to be every day!