

THE HONOR ROLL

VOL. 1 ISSUE 3

ST. MARTIN DE PORRES ACADEMY

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The Core of Our Mission

Supporting our graduates after SMPA

Educational reform is a major issue in our country especially with the growing achievement gap that exists between urban, economically poor students and their suburban peers. Unfortunately, Connecticut is a glaring example of this devastating gap in opportunity. The NativityMiguel Network of 64 schools, of which St. Martin's is a member, is one of several educational models addressing this issue and setting standards that will lead to more systemic reform.

There is, however, one very unique aspect of the NativityMiguel Schools that distinguishes our efforts from other reform models and that is our Graduate Support Program (GSP). When our students come to St. Martin's, generally in 5th grade, we commit to supporting them long after they graduate from SMPA in 8th grade. We call our classes not by their grade level but by the year that we expect that they will graduate from college. Our current 8th graders, as an example, are called the "Class of 2019" and their T-shirts and hooded sweatshirts have that designation emblazoned on the back. That commitment involves our agreement to continue to advocate for, mentor, and in some cases, financially

support our students once they leave us and move on to high school and college.

The foundation of the Program is the goal of having our students be academically, socially culturally, and spiritually prepared to move on to college prep high schools. Since our inception, we have been developing and nurturing our relationships



SMPA supports its graduates well after they leave the walls of the Academy. Pictured: Class of 2019 - ready to move on!

with the top Catholic and private prep high schools in Connecticut in anticipation of our students being accepted at these prestigious institutions. The process of visiting and applying to high schools and then evaluating the "proper

fit" for our students is an extensive and challenging one. It has resulted in 27 of our 31 students in our first two graduating classes now being in eight different private schools including two boarding schools. In our current class of 8th graders, 17 of the 20 students have been accepted into private schools and we are still awaiting further decisions.

Due to the extent of their preparation at the Academy and our ongoing Graduate Support Program, most of

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When students come to St. Martin de Porres Academy, they and their families begin a relationship that will go far beyond middle school. Through our Graduate Support Program, we support our students as they continue on to high school and college.

In this newsletter, you will learn about how the Graduate Support Program is the one aspect of our mission that is truly unique and is a significant motivating force for our students. Graduation from SMPA is just the first step in their academic career.

Allison Rivera



A Litany of Giving

We continue to thank some more of the “angels” who help us fulfill our mission in so many ways:

- **George Wiswell** for arranging for our 5th graders to participate in “The Farms For City Kids” program in Vermont this past Fall.
- **John Santa** for his ongoing networking and advocacy including making the significant connection for us with Fairfield University.
- **Dan Miley** and **Phil DeAngelo** of New Haven Bus Service who for years have provided free buses for our athletic teams and field trips.
- **John Cullen** and **Otis Davis** of Acme Auto Leasing in North Haven who have consistently given us the use of vans for our many student trips and activities.
- **Board Member John Skelly** and his colleagues from Yale-New Haven Hospital who regularly take on much needed painting projects at the Academy.
- **Ellie and George Warburg** who for years have been advocates for our music program – see “The Gift of Music” article.
- **Paul and Stephen Kobasa** for the generous gift of the online World Book Encyclopedia for our students and faculty.
- **Joe DeFeo** of Fairfield University for so ably facilitating our last two Faculty Retreats.
- **Jim Morley** of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra Board for funding NHSO performances at the Academy.
- **Emmett Maher** for his generous assistance in repairing and maintaining our school van.
- **Sam Velleca** who for years has helped us maintain our building.
- **Vin Grasso** whose plumbing help at both the school and teachers’ residence has been invaluable.

And there are many more yet unnamed until our next issue!

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our students have adjusted well to the academic and social challenges that they are facing in high school. We remain in touch with the students, their families, and their high school advisors. Every afternoon at the Academy, we have a program called “Evening Study” where students return to SMPA and receive tutoring in any subject area. On any given day, five to ten of our graduates return for that assistance from our volunteer tutors and SMPA faculty. We also provide our students and their families with help in preparing high school applications and financial aid forms. Next year, we will begin to assist our high school juniors in the very exciting process of looking at and applying to colleges.

It is an ambitious undertaking but one that is vital to our mission. At SMPA, this Program is the creation of our now President, Allison Rivera. This year, Ms. Rivera had the assistance of Kristin Saylor, one of our St. Hilda’s Program interns, in directing this ever-growing effort.

Next year, we will have 51 graduates and 15 eighth graders applying to high schools. In order to address this daunting task, we are creating a Graduate Support Center within the school to serve as the hub of this many faceted program. It will be run by a full-time Director who will report to Ms. Rivera and it will have the space and resources to effectively serve our students’ needs.

We are very grateful to the many individuals and organizations who have financially supported the Graduate Support Program:

- To the members of our High School Scholarship Club who each year provide the funds for tuition to support our graduates.
- To the NewAlliance and J. Walton Bissell Foundations who have consistently and generously funded Graduate Support.
- To the Town Fair Tire Foundation that has provided a substantial multi-year grant to fund the opening of our Graduate Support Center. ♦

Golf fore Kids Returns for Sixth Year

A day of golf to support SMPA

For the past five years, St. Martin de Porres Academy has partnered with Webster Bank to present Golf fore Kids - a golf outing with all proceeds benefiting SMPA. Over those five years, Golf fore Kids has raised over \$200,000 that has gone directly toward student tuition.

This year’s Golf fore Kids will be held on Monday, June 27th at The Farms Country Club in Wallingford, CT. Registration starts at 9:30 am. Golfers will enjoy a light breakfast followed by a shotgun start at 11:00 am. Lunch will also be served on the course. Following play will be a dinner, raffle, and award ceremony.

If you are unable to join us, there are other ways to support Golf fore Kids. Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available at various levels. Donation of auction items, raffle prizes, or goodie bag items are also



welcomed. Please visit www.saintmartinacademy.org/events/golf.html for more information.

We hope you will join us on June 27th for the 6th Annual Golf fore Kids. With your support, we can continue to provide a quality education to underserved girls and boys in the New Haven area.

For more information, please contact Webster Bank at (203) 782-4543 or email gcerrone@websterbank.com

A Collegial Visit

NativityMiguel team visits SMPA

“The Saint Martin de Porres school community is alive with spirit. It is found in the faces of the students, in the testimonials of the teachers, and in the heart of all the key stakeholders.”

-from the Collegial Visit Report

As part of the network of 64 NativityMiguel Schools throughout the country, St. Martin’s adheres to a basic mission and philosophy that unify our school model. The major component of that joint mission is the nine “Mission Effectiveness Standards” that we all agree to strive to attain. The Standards focus on all the significant aspects of successfully operating one of our schools

and cover everything from the faith basis to holistic education to financial sustainability.

In March, a four person team of our peers from other Nativity Miguel schools spent three days at SMPA as part of a “Collegial Visit”. It is a time of assessment that allows for a review and affirmation of our school’s progress in relationship to the nine Standards. For us at SMPA, it was a visit that we welcomed as we prepare for the accreditation process by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) that will begin later this year. This internal appraisal proved to be a great help in our preparation for the more extensive evaluation by NEASC.

As well as recognizing the positive aspects of our ministry, the visiting team also helped in identifying areas where SMPA needs improvement and areas that can be enhanced and grown as our school matures into its next five years of operation.

The resulting 54 page report was a very positive evaluation that not only commended us in our adherence to the Standards but also clearly defined areas that we need to address in order to effectively sustain the operation of our school for many years to come. We are grateful to the visiting team for their forthright and affirming assessment of the Academy as we structure its long term future. ♦

High School Acceptance

Waiting to exhale

One of many advantages to living in New England is that there are seemingly endless options when it comes to high school choice. Our students are fortunate to be able to choose from public magnet schools, technical high schools, Catholic day schools, and independent schools, both day and boarding.

Ask any eighth grader and they will tell you that applying to high school is no easy feat. The eighth grade class has spent hours upon hours writing application essays, applying for scholarships, and visiting schools across the state. Then the waiting to hear begins.

Fortunately, their hard work has paid off – the St. Martin de Porres Academy Class of 2019 has been accepted to an impressive list of high schools:

Boys:

- Notre Dame High School, West Haven, CT (6)
- Xavier High School, Middletown, CT (2)
- Masconomet Regional High School – A Better Chance, Topsfield, MA (1)
- Hillhouse High School, New Haven, CT (1)
- Common Ground High School, New Haven, (1)

Girls:

- Mercy High School, Middletown, CT (8)
- Sacred Heart Academy, Hamden, CT (2)
- Lauralton Hall, Milford, CT (3)
- Kolbe Cathedral High School, Bridgeport, CT (2)
- Hamden Hall Country Day School, New Haven, CT (1)
- Westover School, Middlebury, CT (2)
- Common Ground High School, New Haven, CT (1)
- Eli Whitney Technical High School, New Haven, CT (1)



The Class of 2019 on retreat at Killiam’s Point in Branford.

Decisions on which school each student will attend has not been finalized in all cases. Many factors, especially financial aid, are still being considered before final choices are made. We will publish their decisions in our next issue. Congratulations, Class of 2019! ♦

Wish List

Donations of products, services or your time and expertise are always welcome. We currently have a need for:

Reading Resources

- Text Sets for Reading \$50
- Selected Library Books \$7-\$18
- Teacher Resource Books \$50

Student Needs

- Winter Uniforms \$125
- One-day Class Field Trip \$400

Music

- Wind or Brass Instruments \$200-\$1,000
- 20 School Choir Vests \$30 each
- Reeds, Cork Grease, Swabs \$400

Supplies

- Classroom Art Supplies \$300/sem
- Teacher/Office Supplies \$50+
- Framing Service \$75-\$200
- Photo Printing Service \$500

Technology and Communication

- Classroom LCD Projectors \$600
- Laptop Computers \$500
- Printer Ink Cartridges \$50+
- Stage Sound System \$1,500
- Digital Camera Memory Card \$10
- Microwave \$80

Programs and Athletics

- 6 Basketballs \$25 each
- 6 Footballs \$30 each
- 10 Soccer Balls \$30 each
- Board Games \$10+
- Athletic Uniforms \$50 each
- 25 Soccer Shinguards \$20 each
- 15 Yoga Mats \$15 each

For more information or to fulfill a wishlist item, please contact the Academy at 203.772.2424.

SMPA Students Receive “Mutt-i-grees”

Students intern at North Shore Animal League

The 5th Grade students traveled to Port Washington, NY on the sound-side of Long Island to participate in an internship at the North Shore Animal League, the nation’s largest, no-kill, animal shelter. In conjunction with NSAL and Yale University - The School of the 21st Century, the students worked everyday for a week, as part of the Mutt-i-grees Program.

“Mutt-i-grees” refers to the mixed-breed dogs that you can adopt from an animal shelter. Many of these animals come from puppy-mills that contribute to the highly

unstable cat and dog population in America. The 5th Grade has completed an interdisciplinary unit on this program in their Religion and Reading classes. The curriculum was designed for national use, but our kids were the pilot group. NSAL would decide whether or not to continue the program based on the performance of our group. We are happy to say that the program will not only continue, but will expand.

The 5th Grade spent the week learning about veterinary

medicine, pet education, non-profit management, and the adoption process. The kids helped out the Veterinary Technicians with mixing medications, examining blood tests and processing the paperwork for the walk-in clinic at NSAL. The nurses were all very impressed with our

kids’ willingness to be close to the animals, but they were more impressed with the compassion put forth by the SMPA students.

On that Friday, the kids traveled to Southbury to participate in the Drive-for-Life Tour adoption event. They passed out fliers, collected donations,

campaigned with megaphones, and even performed their semi-famous Mutt-i-grees rap. The event culminated in President Rivera bringing home one of the animals from the shelter, a beagle-mix named Penny.

The 5th Grade class can now tell you anything about how an animal shelter operates, but they are more likely to tell you about how you can help out. Have your pet spayed or neutered, and let’s stop the euthanizing of so many homeless animals. ♦



SMPA 5th Graders spend the day at North Shore Animal League in Port Washington, NY.

Lost Boy of Sudan Visits SMPA

On Thursday, March 24th, 2011, Saint Martin de Porres Academy welcomed Gabriel Bol Deng, one of the “Lost Boys” of South Sudan to share his inspiring life story. Students from Notre Dame High School, and the two NativityMiguel schools from Hartford, Covenant Prep and Grace Academy, helped to create an audience of nearly 150 students, teachers, and administrators. His presentation was filled with wisdom that his father shared with him as a young boy - “You can move mountains!” - and he asked the students to work as hard as they could so that they could take advantage of their education and use it to make the world a better place. The SMPA Interact Club collected almost \$250 to support Gabriel’s school that is being built in his hometown of Ariang, South Sudan.



6th Annual Spring Fling

New location and record attendance

March came in like a lion and went out like... a lion! However, we brought some much needed warmth and hope to the season with our 6th annual Spring Fling at Anthony's Oceanview on March 26th. Our biggest crowd ever - 240 people - enjoyed an evening of spirited friendship, delicious food, a lively band, and an attractive variety of live and silent auction items. The highlight of the evening was the presentations by some of current students and graduates now in high school. The accounts of their experiences at the Academy and their expression of gratitude for the impact that St. Martin's has had on their lives was very moving. They were living proof of the transformative value of our educational model.

We are particularly grateful to Al Terzi, the Emmy Award winning news anchor from WFSB-Channel 3, for emceeding the event and to Michael Morand, the Director of State Communications for Yale University who, for the second year, was our auctioneer. With



Left to Right: Mike Morand, Yale's Office of Public Affairs; Kevin Lembo, CT State Comptroller; Allison Rivera, SMPA President; Kelly O'Leary, SMPA Principal; Al Terzi, Channel 3 News Anchor; Mike Dowley, SMPA Board Chair.

grace and delightful humor, they both made the evening flow smoothly and effectively. As always, it was a collaborative effort of Board members, staff, and donors who once again reflected the power and giftedness of our SMPA family in bringing the evening to reality. We are so very grateful to all our participants and contributors for making the Spring Fling the great success that it was. ♦

A Day of Caring

Our affiliation with many of the local high schools manifests itself in many different ways. One annual event is a joint venture between Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden and Notre Dame High School in West Haven called a "Day of Caring" when students and some parents and teachers from the two schools spend a Saturday helping us do the building projects that never seem to get done. On March 20th, twenty people helped us clean all four floors of the Academy and clean-up the entire property outside including clearing and pitch-forking our entire community garden in preparation for our spring vegetable planting. They worked tirelessly and joyfully and we got a great deal accomplished. We are indebted to the Campus Ministers - Sr. Lany Jo Smith of Sacred Heart and Mrs. Gail Bellucci of Notre Dame for their coordination of the day.

2011 MABACH Tournament

Eagles finish in top three for the third consecutive year

On March 26, 2011 at 6:30 am, while many of their classmates and colleagues were still in their pajamas, 19 St. Martin de Porres Academy teachers and students attended the annual MABACH Tournament. This year's tournament took place at Bishop Stang High School in Dartmouth, MA.

Each spring, members of the Nativity Miguel Network of Schools gather to compete for supremacy in Math, Basketball, and Chess. Points are awarded for each game won, and, at the end of the day, the school with the most points wins the coveted MABACH Cup. This trophy is then held at the victorious school for a year until the next tournament.

The MABACH tournament is a highly anticipated event which emphasizes academics as well as physical skills. It also gives our students the opportunity to interact and compete with students of similar schools and backgrounds throughout the region. This year, St. Martin

de Porres competed against students from 13 other NativityMiguel Schools in the New England region and one from Pennsylvania. Over the years, St. Martin's has become a perennial contender for the championship, winning the cup in 2009 and placing 3rd in 2010.

The St. Martin de Porres Eagles began the day collaborating on a series of difficult word problems in the math section. Students were given 20 minutes to solve these problems, and scored extremely well. The Eagles spent the remainder of the day competing against various schools in chess and basketball. By the end of the tournament St. Martin de Porres was able to accumulate enough victories to finish in 2nd place, only 2 points behind the eventual champions from Boston. Our school not only performed admirably, but also served as great representatives of the spirit and ideals which the school stands for. We had a great time and cannot wait for another shot at bringing the trophy back to New Haven in 2012! Go Eagles! ♦

Eagles Support Bulldogs

SMPA attends a Yale Basketball game

On February 4th, members of the Eagles and Lady Eagles basketball teams had the opportunity to attend the Yale vs. Cornell basketball game at Payne Whitney Gym on the Yale Campus. The event was the brainchild of Mr. John Skelly, one of our generous board members, who purchased tickets for all the players, coaches and chaperones. The teams bravely traversed the ice and snow surrounding the Payne Whitney Gym to catch one of the most exciting Ivy League games of the year.

Mr. Skelly, whose son plays basketball in high school, made sure that the kids of SMPA caught a barn-burner, which was a first college basketball game for many of the students. Yale

features a 6'10" graduate of Notre Dame High School in West Haven, Greg Mangano. Greg and the Eli's hustle, although they went up against a superior shooting team in Cornell, allowed the Bulldogs to come out on top. Yale's teen-heartthrob point guard, Austin Morgan, drove in for a tough layup with less than 2 seconds remaining. On the ensuing possession, with the Eagles and Lady Eagles cheering like mad, the Cornell hoopsters could not convert. Needless to say, the fans went crazy.

Afterwards, the kids had the opportunity to go down onto the court, meet the Yale players, take a group picture, and even meet the coach. Along with meeting the players, a few of the



SMPA students pose with Yale Men's Basketball team after the game.

Yale cheerleaders were there, through their connections to SMPA's cheerleading squad. It was hard to decide who was more taken aback—the Eagles for being next to such tall, grinning athletes; or the Bulldogs, for being next to such adoring, screaming fans. Regardless, a good-time was had by all. ♦

A Gift of Music

Brass Cornucopia Quintet visits SMPA

Two of our most avid music supporters are Ellie and George Warburg of Hamden. Last year, they were at a concert presented by the Brass Cornucopia Quintet at Yale and were so enthusiastic about the ensemble that they approached them about coming to St. Martin's to perform for and work with our

brass musicians. The members of the group were enthused by the idea and the Warburgs very generously provided the funding to make it happen. After a few snow day cancellations, "The Brass" performed two exciting and educational concerts for the whole student body and held individual workshops with our

top student brass musicians. It was the type of experience that illustrated to our students the quality of musical expertise that they can attain if they are willing to work hard. We are so grateful to the Warburgs for their passionate desire to enhance and enrich our music program. ♦

"Swim Across the Sound" Benefit



Students were invited by SMPA Board Member John Farrell to attend The St Vincent's Medical Center "Swim Across the Sound" benefit. Pictured with the students are Senator Dick Blumenthal and Board Member John Farrell.

SMPA Attends Mattingly

SMPA a beneficiary, receives base

Mr. Bowes, Mr. Isaacs, and two of SMPA's fine baseball players, Juan Figueroa and Chris Coriano, attended a Mattingly Charities fundraising event on January 27. Mattingly Charities was founded by former New York Yankee Captain and current Los Angeles Dodgers' Manager, Don Mattingly. With all proceeds going to The Boys' Club of New York, the event was held at Mickey Mantle's Restaurant in New York City and was hosted by Len Berman, legendary sports news anchor for WNBC/Channel 4 until 2009.

According to their website, "Mattingly Charities

Work Hard, Play Hard

Boys & Girls Basketball teams complete successful seasons

This title has been an unspoken mantra for all the St. Martin de Porres winter athletics this year. Specifically, our boys and girls basketball teams led the school through their commitment in the classroom, in practice, and battling on the court. Led by strong and spirited coaching, and supported by a cast of students, family members, and faculty, the SMPA Eagles basketball teams redefined what it means to be a team at SMPA.

Pioneering the way was the first competitive Lady Eagles basketball team at St. Martin's. These ladies were an inspiration in their effort, and a bastion of class while facing a season of growing pains and adversity. Through an eagerness to learn the game, and tireless work ethic the Lady Eagles disrupted offensives with lock down defense, and grew over the course of the season into stingy and difficult opponents. The future of the Lady Eagles looks bright with returning coach, Teaching Fellow Erin Hussey, and a cast of returning athletes who will continue to improve and to fill the leadership roles of a strong group of departing 8th graders.

Also pounding the hardwood this winter was an

electrifying Eagles boy's basketball team. Meeting rigorous academic standards to maintain their ability to play, our Eagles players combined hard work in the classroom and on the court to finish as one of the top 10 teams in the state of Connecticut. They competed fiercely and as gentleman in both victory and defeat and finished the regular season with an impressive 11-3 record, second best in the conference. After a strong showing in the conference tournament, the Eagles advanced to the state tournament and were able to compete for the chance to play for a state championship. With passionate returning coaches, Teaching Fellows Kin Sims and Trish Oakley, at the helm of a group of fearless and talented young men SMPA looks forward to another dominating season.

As St. Martin de Porres Academy's Athletic Director and die hard Eagles basketball fan Paul Tunnell stated, "I am exceedingly proud of what these teams have accomplished, and am humbled by the way they have carried themselves on the court while representing their school. This coming winter I implore any fan of basketball or SMPA to come join us to cheer on the Eagles." ♦

Mattingly Charities Sports Dinner

Baseball equipment

is a non-profit organization, created to serve underprivileged youth by supporting programs which promote baseball and softball participation in conjunction with other developmentally related activities, for the benefit of underprivileged youth, youth leagues, and social welfare and related organizations." Last year, SMPA was a beneficiary of Mattingly Charities when it received a donation of hats, bats, balls, and equipment through an ongoing relationship with Jim Falco of Mattingly Sports.

The event included dinner, a silent auction, and a

question/answer session with Don Mattingly. Juan and Chris had the opportunity to get autographs from baseball greats, like Bernie Williams, Tom Seaver, David Cone, and Goose Gossage. Mickey Mantle's featured sports memorabilia ranging from Mickey Mantle's personal golf bag to the autographed jerseys of basketball and football stars. The highlight of the night was when Juan and Chris were invited to sit with Mr. Mattingly and his wife to talk about baseball and their education and to watch a concert performed by two talented guitarists from The Boys' Club of New York. ♦

The Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is a quarterly publication by St. Martin de Porres Academy.

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About the Academy

Founded in 2005, St. Martin de Porres Academy is a tuition-free, faith-based middle school that empowers children from low-income families to reach their full potential. The Academy's mission is to prepare each student for a quality high school and college education.

SMPA is a nonprofit organization established in accordance with section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is incorporated in the State of Connecticut (EIN#81-0666655). Funds raised go directly to supporting the efforts of the Academy. Please consider making an online donation through our Web site or send a donation to the address below.

St. Martin de Porres Academy
208 Columbus Avenue
New Haven, CT 06519
Tel. 203.772.2424
www.saintmartinacademy.org

Upcoming Events

Open Houses

May 12, 2011 - 7:45 am
May 24, 2011 - 10:00 am
June 8, 2011 - 10:00 am

June 16, 2011
Spring Concert
5:00 pm

June 25, 2011
Graduation - Class of 2019
1:30 pm



St. Martin de Porres Academy
208 Columbus Avenue
New Haven, CT 06519



SMPA Retreat, A Time to Put On the Breaks!

On March 25, the Saint Martin de Porres Academy staff took time off from their usual duties and instead gathered for a day of relaxation at Killam's Point for a staff retreat. This was the third time the staff came together to escape to the retreat house, which is perched along the Long Island Sound. It was a day to breathe, put on the breaks, and simply reflect on our personal and professional lives. Finally, after the blustery and frigid winter months of New England, spring had arrived and a retreat by the water was perfect for a fresh start in the minds and hearts of the SMPA community.

One of the greatest aspects about the retreat program is that the teachers and staff alike are able to interact with each other on a more relaxed level. While the students are the sole reason for our presence at SMPA, it is necessary for our spiritual, mental and physical being to



SMPA Staff spends the day at Killiam's Point

take a step back and decompress for a day of peaceful self-reflection. For the second time, Joe DeFeo, Associate Dean and Director of Student Development at Fairfield University, facilitated our retreat with light meditation techniques, fun activities and small group bonding. Some of these activities were fun and light-hearted and provided an excellent opportunity to reenergize ourselves. For example, our staff was divided into two groups. Each group was assigned a bag of

balloons and tape and needed to build the highest freestanding balloon tower. It was fun to compete and bounce different ideas off our teammates in order to complete the task.

Another wonderful part of our retreat program is that it is centered around the needs and wants of the specific group. We are able to “take what we want” from the activities and “leave what we won't use.” This is especially helpful as we all vary in the ways we internalize our needs and challenges of our day. It is vital for our community to be given the opportunity to just “be” by the water and think about how our students' needs, in combination with our own, are able to be joined on a positive level. The retreat has been a unique chance for our family at SMPA to grow, endure, and sustain each other for the sake of the future successes of our students. ♦