

NEW, HEALTHIER MEALS AT MOTHER SETON ACADEMY

In September, Mother Seton Academy students were met with a surprising and delightful change at school. Thanks to the generosity of Bill and Lisa Stromberg, Mother Seton Academy was able to introduce a new, healthy menu to our students with foods that have no artificial ingredients, no high fructose corn syrup, no fried anything – just fresh, natural ingredients to build a healthier and smarter student.

Mother Seton Academy partnered with Revolution Foods, a leader in serving healthy meals to students across the country. Founded in 2005 by two graduates of UC Berkeley School of Business, Revolution Foods was created to transform the way students and children in our nation are fed. Now, 8 years later, Revolution Foods serves over 850 lunchrooms and nearly 200,000 healthy meals daily to students across 9 states. Revolution Foods' mission is to provide students with access to real foods that promote healthy growth and development.

Presenting menus that are outside the norm has been a key component to the success of Revolution Foods. The meals are prepared with as much regionally-

grown food as possible, and they maintain high standards – no artificial colors or fillers and fresh vegetables and fruit every day. Students also enjoy selecting from 3 meal choices each day. There is a vast array of lunch selections that include items such as Chicken Mole Rojo, Cajun Chicken with Dirty Rice, and Chicken Caesar Salad. Students are also served a healthy breakfast and afternoon snack. Every meal offers non-fat or low-fat, hormone-free milk and fresh fruit, and is nutritionally-balanced.

The program is designed to nurture not only healthy meals but healthy habits. Revolution Foods also delivers a wide range of

nutrition education programs aimed at empowering students to make smart eating decisions. Their programming ranges from classroom instructions to off-campus, hands-on activities designed to encourage student interest and involvement around healthy eating. Eating healthy meals has made such an impact on our students that Mother Seton Academy 7th grader, Shyairra Witherspoon, is now using it as one of her selection criteria for her future high school!



7th graders Shyairra Witherspoon and Nelson Gomez show off some of the nutritious snacks that they enjoy before beginning after-school programs.

Mother Seton Academy Students Testify for Textbook Resources

Sr. Peggy and two 8th graders from Mother Seton Academy – Janiah Tillery and Da' Shawn Bailey – went to Annapolis to testify in support of the increase of \$1.1 million for textbooks and technology for nonpublic schools.

Governor Martin O'Malley has proposed a budget of \$5.54 million for FY2014 for the Nonpublic Student Textbook Program. Through the

program, schools that charge tuition at or below the state average per pupil cost – or depend on scholarships, such as Mother Seton Academy – are able to order nonreligious textbooks and educational technology that would otherwise be unavailable to their students.

This increase over last year's budget of \$4.4 million, while generous, when

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A HOLE IN MY SIDEWALK

Bro. Jesse O'Neill, Mother Seton Academy's Campus Minister, teaches our 6th graders a class called Life Skills. The course gives the students the tools they need to be successful young men and women in the future. Recently, Bro. Jesse read a poem in the class called "A Hole in My Sidewalk." The poem speaks of a person traveling down the sidewalk of life who repeatedly falls into the same hole.

The students had an animated discussion about how this hole might represent an obstacle the person is facing in their life. The students shared how peer pressure, violence or depression can be just such a "hole," and can stop a person from walking down the sidewalk of life.

With Bro. Jesse's guidance, the students learned that when we fall into these holes we have a choice. We can choose to be miserable and stay stuck where we are or we can choose, with God's strength, to rise out of the hole and continue living. It was inspirational to hear from the students how they experience holes in their lives, and how they overcome them.



Bro. Jesse helps 6th grader India Smith prepare to lead her class at one of the Stations of the Cross.

One 6th grade girl shared with great passion and certainty that "pain gives you strength." This student understood clearly the purpose of the lesson, which was to help Mother Seton Academy's students recognize that regardless of what obstacle may come their way in life, God will give them the strength to climb out of that "hole" and continue walking down the sidewalk of life with hope and success. This is just one example of how our students teach the teacher at Mother Seton Academy.

★ on the calendar

The 19th Annual Cardinal Cup 5K Run & 1 Mile Walk



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Spring is here and so is the 19th Annual Cardinal Cup 5K Race and 1 mile fun walk. This event is hosted every year by The School of the Cathedral of Mary our Queen. Students and families from both schools enjoy the beautiful morning, fellowship and exercise. This year's race will be held on **Saturday, April 27th**, at 8:00 a.m. at the School of the Cathedral located at 111 Amberly Way, Baltimore, MD. For registration information, please call 410-563-2833 or visit MotherSetonAcademy.org.

Student Speeches "Life Teaches, Love Reveals"

Join us as the 8th grade students dramatize original speeches they have written that reflect their interpretation of the theme "Life Teaches, Love Reveals." These presentations, a part of their public speaking class requirement, are bound to be informative and inspiring.

Girls' speeches will be held May 6th from 10:00 - 3:00

Boys' speeches will be held May 7th from 10:00 - 3:00

TEXTBOOK RESOURCES

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distributed across all the students currently attending nonpublic schools in Maryland will only increase an additional \$17 per student. At a minimal cost to the state, this program last year benefited the families of 83,429 students attending 346 nonpublic schools in Maryland.

While the support provided by this program is appreciated, it is interesting to note that nonpublic schools provide a substantial savings to the state in per pupil expenditures. At an average cost of \$14,126 to educate a student in public school in 2010-2011, the nonpublic school community saved the state more than \$1.4 billion dollars by educating more than 104,000 K-12 students.

Given that Maryland continues to have one of the lowest Nonpublic Student Textbook Program allocations in its budget, it was important to speak out in favor of the proposed increase. Thank you to Sr. Peggy, Janiah and Da'shawn for spending the day in Annapolis on behalf of Mother Seton Academy and all nonpublic schools.

WRITING, TECHNOLOGY AND THINKING



Bro. Mike working with Shayne Williamson

Bro. Michael Chiuri has been working with the 7th graders to help them sharpen their writing skills, a crucial part of our students' success in school, and life. As part of the project, the 7th grade class typed several letters. In one letter they wrote to a fictional 5th grader who was considering attending Mother Seton Academy. They informed the student of the reasons why they themselves came to Mother

Seton Academy, outlined a typical school day, and indicated some of the things they loved about Mother Seton Academy. Finally, they gave reasons about why they thought someone should attend Mother Seton Academy.

It was wonderful to read the letters and to get a sense of how the students perceive Mother Seton Academy and what they see as important points for a 5th grader to consider. The reasons most often stated were the opportunity to receive a better education than they would otherwise have had, the chance to participate in the special extra-curricular activities offered here, the caring faculty and staff and the Christian environment.

It was inspiring to view our school through our students' eyes, and to realize that our students recognize there are many hands that contribute to the presence and success of Mother Seton Academy. All of the students strongly encouraged the fictional 5th grader to apply to Mother Seton Academy!

REFLECTIONS FROM AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER TIARA BLAND



Tiara assists 6th grader Taylor Jackson with her work.

My name is Tiara Bland and I started volunteering at Mother Seton Academy in September as a gym teacher, classroom assistant for math and literature classes, and as an assistant for the after-school activities. I have enjoyed getting to know the students, and experiencing the joy of

making a difference with the students who are struggling in classes and need my help. In the beginning of the year the students were very reticent to come to me for help. Now, 7 months later, I have a line of students waiting for me to help them with a math problem or vocabulary quiz.

As a first-year teacher, when I see that my students are clamoring to come to gym and start getting into great physical shape, I feel I have accomplished something really important for their overall well-being – and hopefully started them on a healthy life journey. I hope I have changed their life as much as they have changed mine.

★ Letter from the President



This past year has been filled with wonderful opportunities for the Mother Seton Academy community. It is through your generosity that we have been able to provide our students with opportunities that I want to tell you about.

Some of our 8th grade boys and girls are currently working on the third edition of the student newspaper. It is written by and for the students but adults who read it agree it is well done. I wonder if we have future journalists in our midst.

In February, I had the opportunity with two Mother Seton Academy students to give testimony to one of the Maryland House of Delegates Subcommittees on the topic of textbook and technology funding for nonpublic schools. We were testifying in support of the Governor's proposal to increase the funding for these necessary resources. As I write this message to you, the final decision is still pending. Our students had the opportunity to experience firsthand participatory government and to share what it was like with their classmates.

Throughout the year the students have participated in a new school nutrition program featuring whole grains, fresh fruit and balanced meals. We have been able to add new equipment in the kitchen that allows us to serve these freshly cooked meals daily. Although the students miss the salty and sweet, they are enjoying the meals and learning about new and healthy ways of eating. They are certainly growing taller and stronger!

This is a transition time as we hear from our 8th graders about the school they will be attending next year. All were accepted into at least one of their chosen schools. Some are still awaiting offers of scholarships to finalize their selections. Please keep them in your prayers as they make these life-shaping decisions.

Again I thank you for your generous support and ask for your continuing partnership in our effort to build hope and to change futures.

*God bless you,
Sr. Peggy Juskelis*



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★ graduate spotlight

Thank You from Graduate Mariah Wilson '05

Mariah Wilson, a senior at Delaware State University and on the Dean's List, recently contacted Lisa Knickmeyer, Mother Seton Academy's Graduate Support Director, to update her on her progress and to thank the Mother Seton Academy community for our role in shaping her future:

Dear Mother Seton Academy Family:

I am glad to have the opportunity to thank you personally for your generosity. I may not have said this before, but Mother Seton Academy has played an important role in my success. The staff at Mother Seton Academy helped me tremendously when I was in middle school and high school. With the help of the staff at Mother Seton Academy, I was able to get into a great high school and was prepared for college. And now here we are, almost eight years later, and you are still helping me!

Without Mother Seton Academy, there would be many students such as myself unable to pursue the career they have dreamed of. My plans include attending medical school and becoming a pediatrician. I am currently in the process of studying for the MCAT. I hope that I will be able to inform you of my acceptance into a medical school sometime this year.

I hope to be able to serve in a position sometime in the future where I might have the ability to help those less fortunate and under-represented as you have helped me. Thank You!

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