



# Tartan

EDUCATING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE FOR LIVES OF LEARNING, LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

## REFLECTIONS

### Looking Forward: Happy New Year Tartans

By Marcus D. Hurlbut, Headmaster



The arrival of a new calendar year gives us all a chance to step back, reflect on the year just passed and chart the course for the future. On November 16, St. Margaret's took a huge step toward the future when we gathered as a school community to break ground for a new Performing Arts Center and subsequent Middle School. This was truly a joyous moment for all of us there that morning. I have always believed that schools are places of optimism and hope for the future, and

St. Margaret's Day 2010 was clearly an emphatic statement of both of these.

As we embark on a new year and a long-awaited and much needed project, I have been reminded repeatedly this fall of what this is all about. This is not building for building's sake but rather an affirmation of what we stand for as a school and a tribute to the extraordinary talents of our students and faculty. By all measure, we have had an extraordinary fall. Led by an outstanding group of seniors in the Class of 2011, our students have brought distinction to themselves and our school in so many ways, in and out of the classroom. At a time when many schools in our area and across the country are cutting back on the arts, our programs are flourishing as evidenced by exceptional theater, musical and dance productions involving students from Preschool through grade 12. I am continually amazed at how far we've come in these essential (yes, to us they are!) programs. It would be tempting and convincing to assess the progress of the performing arts at St. Margaret's by the sheer growth in the numbers of students participating, but for me the value is the pure joy these programs bring to our entire school community. As our Director of the Arts, Darcy Rice reminds us that life is better with art. I couldn't agree more!

Our athletic teams have been superb this fall bringing three CIF championships and one state championship to the school, the most successful season in the history of St. Margaret's Episcopal School. Congratulations to all our teams and especially to the girls' varsity tennis team which won its third consecutive CIF championship (and 72 consecutive matches) and to the boys' cross-country team which

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### Advanced Placement Curriculum: *Rigor* and *Flexibility*

By Ryan Dahlem, Upper School Assistant Principal



As a college-preparatory school, St. Margaret's offers all students a rigorous academic curriculum to facilitate a successful transition to university study. St. Margaret's demanding graduation requirements ensure that all students meet the admission criteria of four-year colleges and universities across the country. Advanced Placement courses are an important part of the St. Margaret's Upper School curriculum, enabling students who show readiness for college-level coursework to increase their preparation for advanced study and, in some cases, begin earning college credit.

St. Margaret's offers 24 AP courses ranging from core academic disciplines to music and art (see inset for full list). From student-designed experiments in AP physics to original compositions in AP music theory, St. Margaret's students have the opportunity to engage in meaningful, college-level learning experiences that support intellectual and creative development.

More than 50 percent of Upper School students enroll in at least one AP course, typically in a discipline of particular interest to the student. Students must meet certain prerequisites and receive faculty approval to enroll in AP courses, which entail an increased workload and faster pace. A student's advisor typically assists him or her with selecting a balanced course load.

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# Tartan



St. Margaret's Episcopal School  
Marcus D. Hurlbut, Headmaster

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won a first-ever state championship. As we begin a new calendar year and witness a new building coming up out of the ground, we will be reminded regularly of our many blessings as a school community. This new chapter in the history of St. Margaret's is a profound and powerful tribute to the dedication and commitment of several generations of Tartans who have created the school we are today. Much has been accomplished these past 32 years and we are now poised for another exciting time in the history of St. Margaret's Episcopal School.

Happy New Year and congratulations to us all!

TIMEPIECE

## The Strong Bonds of the Tartan

*By Lisa Merryman, Faculty Emeritus and School Archivist*



Timepiece articles feature information from the St. Margaret's Episcopal School archives and focus on informing the current Tartan community about St. Margaret's past, and how it is connected to the present.

This article does exactly that, but its content is only partially contained in the archives. The story involves three Tartan alumni: Michael Newman, Class of 2008; Todd Newman, Class of 1991; and Nicholas Tsutsui, Class of 2009.

At approximately 9 p.m. on October 27, 2010, Michael Newman, a current student at the University of San Francisco, became violently ill. He called his good friend, Nicholas Tsutsui, whom he did not know at St. Margaret's but had met last year at college in San Francisco. Nicholas accompanied Michael to the hospital where it was determined that he needed an emergency appendectomy. Nicholas then called Michael's brother, Todd Newman, who is a physician at Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach. He also called Michael's mother, Charlotte Newman. Through text messages and phone calls, Nicholas kept Todd and Charlotte informed throughout the night as the surgery was completed and Michael was transferred to the recovery room.

Nicholas stayed at the hospital to make sure Michael's needs, especially vital pain medication, were being met. Michael's mother could not get a flight to San Francisco until later in the morning. When Charlotte arrived at 9 a.m., she was met by Nicholas, who took her to the nurse's station so that she could get an update on Michael's condition.

This amazing story is a perfect illustration of the kind of character Tartans develop. It is a living example of how our students prepare for lives of learning, leadership and service. Nicholas Tsutsui gave his "all" for his fellow Tartan alum, Michael Newman.



Families sometimes wonder how the AP program compares to other college-level curriculum options, such as the International Baccalaureate program. This question is often driven by a misperception that college admission offices prefer one curriculum over another. In reality, when students apply to college, their applications are evaluated within the context of courses offered at the school and the strength of the student body as a whole. Since all St. Margaret's courses are college-preparatory, up to and including AP courses, and since the percentage of students attending a four-year college or university is remarkably high (nearly 100 percent every year), St. Margaret's students present very well in the college admission process, regardless of the number of AP courses taken, and are sought after by institutions across the country. It is no surprise that 114 colleges and universities visited campus this fall to recruit St. Margaret's students.

Prior to joining St. Margaret's, I made several visits to the Upper School to meet and recruit students while serving as associate director of admission at Stanford University. In that time, I read thousands of applications from high schools across the country, including St. Margaret's. When presenting St. Margaret's students to the Stanford Admission Committee each year, I made certain to place the students within the context of a very rigorous academic program and stellar student body. In short, the "water level" is high at St. Margaret's and college admission offices across the country know this.

It is essential to note that just as schools implement different curricula, not all schools who offer the AP program are the same. Importantly, many of St. Margaret's teachers serve as graders for the AP exam each spring. This level of faculty expertise, combined with smaller class sizes (the average Upper School class size is 14 students), allows St. Margaret's to deliver AP courses at a very high level of instruction and learning. Students' scores on the culminating AP exams each spring illustrate the exceptional instruction and strength of St. Margaret's student body with recent pass rates between 88 and 90 percent (the 2010 national AP exam average pass rate was 57 percent). A passing score is a three or higher on a scale of five. St. Margaret's students who earn a score of four or five often earn course credits when they matriculate to college.

Each institution sets its own policy on accepting AP credit and usually posts the policy on the school's website.

Finally, on a practical level, the AP program is a good match for St. Margaret's in that it provides access to the most challenging, college-level courses while allowing students the flexibility to select other demanding academic electives such as marine science, mythology, engineering and constitutional law. This would not be possible within the more rigid structure of other curriculum programs. The AP program also allows St. Margaret's students to fulfill the graduation requirement of three semesters of religious study by taking courses such as Bible as literature, world religions and philosophy. These courses help provide the important spiritual and moral foundation of attending an Episcopal school.

AP courses compliment St. Margaret's existing college-prep curriculum to create an academic program that is rigorous yet flexible enough to meet the needs of all students as they pursue their academic interests and prepare for the transition to college.



### St. Margaret's Advanced Placement Courses:

#### English

English Literature and Composition

#### Fine Arts

Art History  
Studio Art: 2D Design  
Studio Art: 3D Design  
Studio Art Drawing  
Music Theory

#### History

Modern European History  
Geography  
Government  
U.S. History  
World History

#### Language

French  
Japanese  
Latin  
Spanish  
Chinese

#### Math

Calculus AB  
Calculus BC  
Computer Science  
Statistics

#### Science

Environmental Science  
Biology  
Chemistry  
Physics

# Preschoolers and Science...It's WONDER-ful!

By Ingrid Andrews, Director of the Early Childhood Development Center and Wee Tartan Center



In Preschool, science is a verb—“sciencing”—denoting observing, wondering, predicting, discovering, classifying, asking questions and exploring. Young children are curious to find out all about the world around them, and they don’t need much prompting to do so! Preschoolers want to know how things work, how things grow,

where things come from and disappear to. “Where have the puddles gone?” “Why do worms wiggle so?” “Where do butterflies go when it rains?” Anyone who has been around a Preschool student for very long knows this, I’m sure!

We provide children with opportunities to explore and interact with plants and animals, sand and water, light and shadows, and nature and physics as well as basic tools. The young child is full of wonder and curiosity and we, the grownups, are their lab assistants, helping the “real scientists” predict, observe and ask good questions.

Kathleen Conezio and Lucia French, authors of the *Science Start!* curriculum, say, “It is not exaggerating to say that children are biologically prepared to learn about the world around them, just as they are biologically prepared to learn to walk and talk and interact with other people. Because they are ready to learn about the everyday world, young children are highly engaged when they have the opportunity to explore.”

In Preschool, learning is integrated. As a result, while children are busy investigating silkworms or digging in the dirt, they are also developing math skills (sorting, counting and patterning) and vocabulary to help them represent concepts that they are constructing. For children, practice with problem solving, hypothesis testing and generalizing thoughts becomes the foundation skills for other learning.

Another important part of preschool “sciencing” is communicating. Children ask questions, compare ideas and re-evaluate their theories. St. Margaret’s Preschool teachers guide the children with open-ended questions and give time for children to explore and construct their ideas.

One of the best places children can practice their “sciencing” is in the garden. A beautifully manicured one or a patch of weeds is just as interesting to a Preschool student—and just as full of learning. There is mounting concern today among educators about something identified as nature deficit disorder. In his book, *Last Child in the Wood*, Richard Louv brings attention to the lack of time children are spending outside. Louv believes that beyond the cognitive gains that children make as curious young explorers

of nature, there are important gains in social, emotional and physical health, as well. Getting children outside and exploring nature is a high priority for us at St. Margaret’s. The Preschool students are even part of the St. Margaret’s Episcopal School Garden (thanks to Early Childhood Development Center Motor Development Specialist Shelley Harmon) through our “vermiculture” (worm raising) compost project. Oh my, they love watching those worms!

All too often, teachers gather children around a pile of sand, add vinegar and baking soda, invite them to “watch the volcano explode” and call it science. At St. Margaret’s, we know that Preschool students need time and opportunities to explore their world and construct their theories. By not jumping in to tell students how something works, we allow them the chance to be curious, wonder-filled scientists. By making the learning “authentic,” we provide the best opportunities for young scientists to develop their skills.

Kathleen Conezio and Lucia French, *Science in the Preschool Classroom*. NAEYC Young Children Journal. September 2002. <http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200209/scienceinthepreschoolclassroom.pdf>

Books for young children about nature: <http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200801/BTJRcommendedNatureBooks.pdf>



# The Lower School Science Program: Building Understanding and Promoting Inquiry and Love of Science

By Dr. Regina McDuffie, Academic Dean and Lower School Principal



In the Lower School, our science curriculum is based on the California State Standards with an added engineering and robotics component. There are five units of study that students follow each year: physical science, life science, earth science, investigation and experiment and engineering. Each year, the level of difficulty of topics studied

increases and the specific lessons taught build upon the previous year, giving the student an opportunity to build a solid foundation in scientific understanding before entering Middle School.

For example, in Kindergarten, students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behaviors of plants and animals. By grade 3, students know the structure of plants and animals and how those structures serve different functions in growth and survival. By grade 5, students learn more details about plant and animal structures, such as the steps in the digestion process and how blood circulates through the body. In addition to the growth of content knowledge across grade levels, students also learn scientific literacy skills, such as connecting science to other disciplines and active engagement in activities that investigate and analyze scientific questions.

As part of our engineering curriculum, we have introduced a robotics component in Kindergarten through grade 3. In Kindergarten and grade 1, we are introducing engineering concepts through the use of Bee Bots, which are programmable robots that teach students to use math and science knowledge, coupled with the skills of critical thinking and creativity, to learn how robots work. In our grade 2 and 3 classrooms, we are building upon that knowledge with the use of Pico Crickets which are more complex and sophisticated. With Pico Crickets, students learn to use programming software to build sound, motion and light sensors that make the Pico Cricket interact with its user. Our plan is to continue the robotics curriculum in grades 4 and 5 next year.

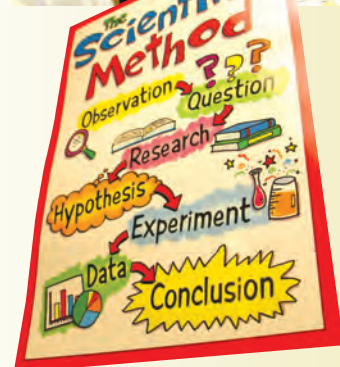
We are also building a global sustainability component into our Lower School science program. One highlight from this year is our grade 4 students participating in the National Association of Independent Schools 20/20 global challenge. The grade 4 students at St. Margaret's will be collaborating with students from a charter school in Detroit and an international school in Kuwait to solve the problem of water deficits in the world.

“The 20/20 global challenge is an amazing opportunity that will inspire and challenge our students to take their knowledge of

science and the resources around them to become active citizens in the community,” said Lower School Science Teacher Morgan Young. “They can tackle a problem that affects us locally as well as globally. Our children can truly make a difference!”

Parents can help support young children in developing a love of science and a curiosity about scientific discovery by:

- Encouraging questions and dialogue about the world.
- Reading newspaper reports on science discoveries.
- Reading non-fiction texts on science topics.
- Sharing stories or reading biographies of male and female scientists.
- Engaging in family activities at museums, zoos, the beach and the mountains.
- Talking about the variety of science and engineering careers that are part of our world today.



# St. Margaret's Science Department Philosophy

By Dr. Jennifer Ross-Viola, Science Department Chair and Upper School Science Teacher



In the St. Margaret's science department, we prepare our students for success in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math) in college and beyond. More than half of the 30 fastest-growing occupations, projected through 2018, will require substantial mathematics or science preparation,<sup>1</sup> and in the next ten years, the

demand for scientists and engineers in the U.S. will increase at four times the rate as compared to all other occupations.<sup>11</sup> These STEM occupations will be a critical foundation to our national economy. We realize that not all students will major in a STEM-related field; however, in an ever-increasing technological and scientific world, all of our students need to understand foundational principles of science to be informed citizens of the global community.

## Departmental Philosophy

In the science department, our philosophy is that science is a process rooted in curiosity, awe, understanding and respect for the natural world in which we live. In science courses at St. Margaret's, students are encouraged to become autonomous learners in a collaborative environment. Given that much future "new knowledge" will be science-based and that today's school-aged children are exposed daily to more science information than any other generation, our science students are encouraged to engage in activities of wonderment, experimental design, critical thinking and logical problem solving, and to strike a balance between scientific open-mindedness and skepticism. Our students are asked to demonstrate scientific literacy and use effective communication skills to explain their findings. With this background, we hope students will mature into responsible stewards of the Earth and build a lifelong interest in science.

## Best Teaching Practices

The St. Margaret's science department strives to implement hands-on and real world experiences for its students as often as possible. For example, in the grade 7 life science class, students solve a "crime" using forensic techniques they study in class. All grade 8 science students participate in the St. Margaret's Science Fair and hear from a speaker in a science-related field during the Middle School Night of Science on the eve of the Fair. Some students go on to compete in the Orange County Science and Engineering Fair and to the state competition. Students in the Advanced Placement environmental science class choose an environmental question that pertains to our St. Margaret's community. They then research and present their findings to the Upper School community.

Field study opportunities also allow our students to learn outside of the classroom. At the beginning of the academic year, all of the grade 6 students attend Space Camp in Idyllwild and grade 7 students attend the Catalina Island Marine Institute, experiences that they can refer to in their science classes the rest of the year. In the Upper School, our marine science students take field trips to the tide pools at the Dana Point Marine Life Refuge and the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve. Our physics students have a "physics day" at a local amusement park and our AP environmental science students tour the Prima Deshecha Landfill in San Juan Capistrano.

As a final example, between their junior and senior years in the Upper School, science students can request to participate in our University of California, Irvine engineering internship program to learn what scientific research is like at the collegiate level. These offerings and others allow our students to experience science in a more concrete way and appreciate the scientific processes that surround them every day.

The science curriculum is designed to include the study of natural phenomena and societal issues that students will encounter in their everyday experience. This is exemplified by the grade 7 life science students' participation in the QuikScience Challenge. Students work in cooperative teams to identify a specific concern in ocean science. The students then create a lesson plan, a community service project, a written solution for an environmental challenge, a portfolio and a presentation about their concern.

Science classes are also a great place to see student collaboration; students work in cooperative teams to solve problems and analyze and synthesize data. An example of this is the project teams that the Upper School introduction to engineering students work in each quarter to research a discipline-specific engineering design topic; design and build a workable prototype powered aircraft (aeronautical engineering); design and build a bridge structure to withstand a specific amount of normal stress (mechanical engineering); design and build a solar voltaic system (electrical engineering); and design a water purification system (chemical engineering).

## Professional Development

The science department is horizontally aligned, with all teachers of a given course collaborating to create the lesson plans for that course. This includes giving the same tests, quizzes, laboratory activities and homework assignments. Conversations regularly occur in the science department about how a particular assignment will be graded, and scores on large projects are standardized across classes to ensure consistency in evaluation and grading. In addition to the horizontal alignment already well-established in the science department, we collaborated on a Kindergarten through grade

12 vertical alignment of skills. We have developed our own set of core skills using references, such as the College Board's Science Curriculum Alignment Guide. Because we know what skills students are working on in the lower grades, we can build on their prior knowledge to foster deeper conceptual growth as they progress from Lower to Middle to Upper School science classes. Our teachers also participate in a number of independent professional development activities, from scoring national AP subject tests to receiving training on subject-specific equipment such as telescopes for our astronomy class.

### Science Course Offerings

Students in grades 6 and 7 take earth science and life science, respectively. In grade 8, most students will take physical science, but a few may be accepted into conceptual physics, the typical grade 9 science course. This is based on a student's math level, interest in science and approval from Middle School faculty.

After conceptual physics, students take either biology or chemistry honors. After biology, most students go on to take chemistry or

honors chemistry. After completing the foundational Upper School science courses, students may choose from a number of other science offerings including physiology, astronomy, AP biology, AP chemistry, AP environmental science and AP physics. Two new courses, introduction to engineering and marine science, have rounded out our curricula and have increased the number of students in our science classes. In fact, 21 percent of our senior class is enrolled in two or more science classes. The science graduation requirement for Upper School students is three years, including one year of physical and one year of biological science, but the vast majority of our students will take four or more years of science. Science is thriving at St. Margaret's!

<sup>1</sup> "Economic News Release: Economic Projections (2008-2018 Summary)." Bureau of Labor Statistics. United States Department of Labor, 10 Dec. 2009. Web. 11 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm>>.

<sup>2</sup> "National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2007 (mathematics) and 2005 (science)." National Center for Educational Statistics. U.S. Department of Education Institute of Educational Sciences, n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2010. <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>>.

As the Science Department Chair, Dr. Jennifer Ross-Viola oversees the curriculum for grades 4-12. She joined St. Margaret's Episcopal School in the fall of 2007 and became the science department chair in the fall of 2008. She currently teaches Upper School conceptual physics, Advanced Placement environmental science and marine science at St. Margaret's. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in biology from the University of San Diego and a Ph.D. in cellular and physiological dynamics in the department of biology from the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Ross-Viola also holds a California clear single subject teaching credential in biology and chemistry. She has been teaching high school and college courses for 13 years.



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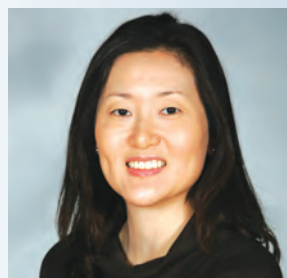
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# Supporting Teachers' Ongoing Growth and Development

By Dr. Regina McDuffie, Academic Dean and Lower School Principal



In the November/December 2010 *Tartan* newsletter, you read about how St. Margaret's finds the best teachers and supports them through a mentoring program. I would like to follow up on that article by sharing with you an overview of the teaching framework that we use to help support teachers in growing at their craft.

At St. Margaret's, we use a professional framework for teacher performance that is modeled on research done by Charlotte Danielson, an educational consultant. The purpose of the framework is to provide our faculty with guidelines for best practices in teaching. The seven specific criteria that are used to evaluate teacher performance at St. Margaret's Episcopal School are:

**Instruction:** The teacher must demonstrate that the delivery of instruction results in meaningful lesson plans that result in active student learning.

**Classroom Environment:** The teacher must create a physical environment that engages all students in purposeful learning and establishes a climate of fairness and respect.

**Content and Curriculum Knowledge:** The teacher must demonstrate thorough knowledge of the subject matter and organize the curriculum to support student understanding.

**Planning:** The teacher must establish clear instructional goals and objectives that establish high expectations for all students and develop learning activities that are research based and support the instructional goals.

**Student Assessment:** The teacher must establish and clearly communicate the learning goals for all students and use a variety of assessments that are ongoing, meaningful and consistent with instructional goals.

**Professional Growth and Development:** The teacher must reflect and plan professional development experiences that support his or her ongoing growth as a teacher.

**Professionalism:** The teacher must take initiative in assuming an active role in the life of the school, make meaningful but appropriate connections with colleagues, families and the community. The teacher must meet the requirements as stated in their St. Margaret's Episcopal School contract.

At St. Margaret's, all teachers write SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, results oriented and time bound) goals and share them at a goal setting conference with the division principal, department chair and faculty colleagues. After goals are approved by the division principal, the faculty member participates in a clinical supervision process for classroom observation and feedback. In the clinical supervision process, the evaluator makes both formal and informal visits to the teacher's classroom. During a formal observation process, the evaluator meets with the teacher before the lesson to discuss the teacher's lesson plan. The evaluator visits the classroom for 45 minutes to an hour and then conducts a post observation conference where the teacher reflects upon the lesson and the evaluator gives his or her feedback to the teacher. Each formal observation results in a written report by the evaluator. Additionally, some of St. Margaret's faculty members participate in an independent project during which they might conduct an action research study or pilot a new program for the school.

Each member of the faculty is also required to submit a portfolio at the end of each school year which includes a self-evaluation, a student or parent survey (depending on the grade level), samples of lesson plans, curriculum maps or assessments used during that school year and a summary of his or her professional development hours. Finally, at the end of each school year, every faculty member receives an evaluation report that rates his or her performance in the seven criteria listed.



## What is the PTF Arts Alliance?

An Interview with Laurie Girand, PTF Arts Alliance Chair

By Heather Lasting, PTF Communications and Publicity Chair



### What exactly is the Arts Alliance?

The Arts Alliance is a branch of the Parent Teacher Fellowship that includes four divisions: cultural arts, theater arts, visual arts, and music and dance. Founded in 2001, the Arts Alliance was developed to expand awareness of the arts on campus, promote planned arts activities and support and extend the abilities of the St. Margaret's faculty and administration to enrich the fine art experiences of St. Margaret's students.

### What types of art events and fundraising does the Arts Alliance provide?

The Arts Alliance is responsible for hosting three major events each year: the Kindergarten through grade 12 Visual Arts Exhibit on March 3; the Middle and Upper School Coffee House Cabaret, a talent showcase held on March 5; and the Upper School Arts Banquet. Our volunteers are involved in every arts event on campus, from providing water to the Tartan Marching Band to decorating a stage set. All money raised goes directly back into the arts.

### What's the best part of chairing the Arts Alliance?

Working with so many amazing parents with such diverse talents: from Excel proficiency to hostess skills, from sewing/costuming to photography. Some of our best results come when we achieve a perfect synergy between the talents of our team and the task we're trying to accomplish. I feel very lucky to know these parents.

### What do you wish parents knew about the arts at St. Margaret's?

First, it's hard to imagine that just seven years ago St. Margaret's arts program was a fraction of the size it is today. The combined vision of donors, volunteers and arts faculty and staff has brought our students opportunities typically only available in a much larger or more specialized school. We are fortunate to have this unique combination in which every member of the arts faculty can have a relationship with every student. St. Margaret's offers so many directions in which our children can grow.

Second, we have deep resources: a vast costume room where costumes can be repurposed for later shows, and a technology mentor, provided by the Nicholas Foundation, to help our students learn the behind-the-scenes physics and software of sound, lighting and film.

Third, the arts at St. Margaret's prepares our children for life. If you want to ensure that your children can conceive of solutions, embrace the unexpected, feel comfortable in new situations, act with resilience when faced with obstacles and present themselves well, encourage them to get involved.

Fourth, we have some of the most incredibly talented students and faculty in South Orange County. Hire a sitter, skip a movie and attend a St. Margaret's performance or exhibit. Prepare to be amazed. Our students win awards every year. Some have even turned professional.

Lastly, once the new Performing Arts Center is built, we anticipate having extended arts opportunities, at which point we will need your help even more. Come join the fun and get involved!



# Am I Missing Something?

By Roland M. Allen, Director of College Counseling



The concern I hear expressed most often from Upper School parents is the fear that their child is missing some critical element in the academic program, and is not “on track” for selective college admission. There’s no standard response to that concern. Neither is there a one-size-fits-all answer to how a particular student should make best

use of his or her time in Upper School. There are however a few tips to share that are applicable to most students in their first two years of Upper School:

- Explore the college counseling website ([www.smes.org/college](http://www.smes.org/college)) and learn about services offered by the St. Margaret’s college counselors.
- Early on, create a résumé file; document all school and community activities you take part in including: athletics, arts and service; and include a list of volunteer or paid jobs you hold. Update this file every semester.
- Freshmen should become involved in at least one co-curricular activity and, if possible, establish a true presence within the group. Talk to your advisor if you’re having problems figuring out what program(s) to get involved in.
- Freshmen and sophomores should develop a four-year academic plan with their advisors. Make sure that you’re on track to get

required classes completed early, taking particular care to complete religion and fine arts requirements so that you’ll have space for academic electives or classes with limited availability in grades 11 and 12.

- Students in grades 9 and 10 should talk to St. Margaret’s college counselors at the start of their second semester about making summer plans. Perhaps you will take part in a summer program or camp on a college campus or attend a workshop. Some students take an extra class at community colleges in order to pursue an independent academic interest. You might consider getting a summer job or participating in an internship. There are many possibilities.
- Monitor your academic progress, even as early as first semester of your freshman year. Students should regularly talk to their academic advisors about improving classroom performance and/or evaluate appropriate curriculum rigor. Students should stretch themselves academically, but also make wise choices about which classes match their academic ability. Don’t make the mistake of thinking that grades earned during your freshman year won’t matter to colleges. They do matter.

I can’t overemphasize the importance of encouraging students to make a solid connection with their Upper School advisor. Likewise, students in any class level should feel free to speak with the college counselors when they have questions or concerns related to preparing for college.

## Book Dedications

The Birthday Book Program honors students’ birthdays while building our Library’s collections. Parents dedicate funds to the Library for a book. Using these donations, our librarians select reading material at the appropriate grade level and include a bookplate with the student’s name.

### October 2010

#### Preschool

Richard Berteau  
Luke Newman  
Spencer Olvera-Harle

#### Lower School

Nicole Acacio  
Merielle Billyou Palmer  
Clayton Chalmers  
Alexa Christensen  
Evette Chung  
Knolton Clark  
Mary Collier  
Nadia Farjami  
Kalei Gregg

David Harding  
Maxwell Harline  
Felix Jacobs  
Mathew Josephs  
Jenny Li  
Emelie Miller  
Justin Minn  
Tiana Pavia  
Sarah Pence  
Nicholas Pierce  
Eloise Scott  
Mary Smith  
Matthew Stevenson  
Harrison Trikas  
Jordan Westendorf  
Idana Wilson  
Natalie Yee

#### Middle School

Cedric Cole  
Kayla Farahbod  
Jessica Guerinot  
Ruth Harding  
Alastair Hurry  
Delaney Thomas

#### Upper School

Melanie Arnold  
Molly Brooks  
Michael Dougher  
Byron Manzo  
Carlye Porrazzo  
Shivani Tarsadia



## Spring Fundraiser Fund-A-Need Update

By Lara Farhadi, Director of Advancement



As we near this year's Spring Fundraiser, "Tartans on Broadway," we want to update you on the impact of your support of last year's Fund-A-Need Auction program.

Last year's Fund-A-Need gifts were designated to the 21st Century Learning Initiative, which supports innovative instruction, relevant

curricula and critical professional development for St. Margaret's faculty. While the 21st Century Learning Initiative (or 21C, as faculty refer to it) funds focused on securing technology upgrades for the different divisions at St. Margaret's (see inset), it is far more than just technology integration.

Twenty-one-C is about the evolution of educational programs at St. Margaret's that are meeting the challenges of a changing world. Twenty-one-C provides the necessary creative, dynamic and engaging learning environments that foster creativity and critical thinking in our students. These qualities join adaptability in ensuring a successful future in a world where technology integration and globalization are the new standard.

The St. Margaret's faculty focuses on teaching for understanding of enduring concepts, critical thinking and creativity. Upgrading the physical teaching environment to provide strong support of this teaching methodology ensures that the core of a St. Margaret's education will meet the needs of the next generation of students.

We thank all of the donors who supported this initiative and the Parent Teacher Fellowship for its partnership and continued efforts on behalf of St. Margaret's and our students.

### Lower School

Computer carts  
Computer lab for grade 2 pod  
Promethean digital whiteboards  
Bee Bots and Pico Crickets that spark the imagination, stimulate creative thinking and engage children in playful learning  
Aver media pens

### Middle School

Foreign language, English and math computer carts  
Document cameras  
iPads for science instruction and library projects

### Upper School

Science computer cart  
Promethean digital whiteboards, primarily for foreign language  
Document cameras  
Upper School lab renovations that incorporate collaborative spaces



## Church Chimes

All Are Welcome To Join Us For Worship

### Regular Weekly Schedule of Services:

#### Sundays

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist

9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Includes Sunday School Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program for preschoolers through grade 5, youth group (grades 6-12), choir and nursery care for infants and toddlers.

11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist

#### Wednesdays

7 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### Ordination Day for Mother Mary Marjorie and Father Philip DeVaul

On Saturday, January 8, our Chaplains, The Reverend Mary Marjorie Bethea and The Reverend Philip DeVaul will celebrate their ordinations to the priesthood at 10 a.m. at St. John's Cathedral in Los Angeles.

All are welcome to join us for this great occasion for Mother Mary Marjorie, Father Phil and for the entire church and school community.

Please contact the Church Office if you would like to travel along with us for the service!

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# Tartan

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, each issue of the Tartan newsletter will present an in-depth look at one of St. Margaret's five, core academic departments: English, math, science, history and foreign language. Subsequently, Tartan Talks during the school year will concentrate on the academic discipline represented in the current Tartan newsletter. At each gathering we will present the department's philosophy, best practices, an overview of the curriculum across the divisions of the school, coursework examples and the professional development program. The next Tartan Talk, on January 13, 8 a.m. in Sillers Hall, will focus on the science department.



## SCHOOL COUNSELOR

# The Role of St. Margaret's All-School Counselor

By Janice Avalone, All-School Counselor



As part of St. Margaret's faculty for the past 15 years, I have had the privilege to share in the growth of students who are now reaching Upper School graduation. These relationships serve as a solid foundation for my new role as all-school counselor. Located on the second floor of the Campaign Center, my office provides an open

and comfortable environment.

My role as all-school counselor is to provide assistance to students who seek guidance with their own personal and emotional development. In this capacity, I establish programs and activities as part of a comprehensive wellness plan. Counseling can be done on an individual basis or in group settings. My areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to:

- Initiating and coordinating school-wide guidance and counseling services.

- Consulting with parents, faculty and other professionals to assist in fulfilling the needs of our students.
- Offering student, teacher and parent interactive workshops to address current needs and concerns, as well as contemporary topics, and to provide a calendar for participation opportunities.
- Adhering to confidentiality standards of the counseling profession.  
Student programs may include:
  - Conflict-resolution
  - Bullying prevention
  - Substance abuse
  - Building self-esteem
  - Identifying stressors and their effect on personal, physical and mental health
  - Relieving stress and anxiety by implementing relaxation skills

Students may be referred to the counseling office through faculty and/or parental recommendation, as well as through self-referral. Please feel free to contact me at 949.661.0108, ext. 282 or [janice.avalone@smes.org](mailto:janice.avalone@smes.org).