# PRESION Reversion. Voice



IN THIS ISSUE	
Announcements p 4	
50 Years of Friendship p 7	
CHALLENGE DAY 2019 p10	

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNAE, FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF PRESTON HIGH SCHOOL



#### Dear Preston Family and Friends,

The start of every academic year brings change and 2019-20 is no exception. Last June we had to bid farewell to retiring teachers John Dillon (Science) and John Hayes (Theology & Music), although Mr. Hayes continues to lead our wonderful Gospel Choir and provides musical accompaniment for our liturgies, thank goodness. We also bid farewell to some long-time members of our faculty who have moved on to other things and places, including Maureen Cuomo (Computer program and IT), Dr. Mark King

(Theology), Kevin Lueck (Latin), Philine Vega Lehmann (History), and Ashley Wnuk (History). We wish them all happiness and success in their new endeavors.

I'm happy to report that academic year 2019-20 is off to a smooth start. We welcomed 100 enthusiastic members of the Class of 2023(!) on September 4<sup>th</sup>, along with our returning students. This year we are focusing our attention on our core values of Dignity, Honor, Respect, and Compassion, and our newest students are already well-acquainted with those qualities and our expectations, as well as with our mission. Last year we were able to bring in an organization called Challenge Day to address the entire student body, faculty and staff. What is Challenge Day? The answer to that question can be found on Challenge Day's website:

"Imagine a school where everyone feels safe, loved and celebrated. Imagine enemies finding common ground and making peace; friends healing past hurts and making amends; people igniting their passion for service and leadership; adults and youth working together to create a school where everyone is included and thrives. This is Challenge Day." The program goes beyond traditional anti-bullying efforts, building empathy and inspiring a school-wide movement of compassion and positive change."

Last month we brought Challenge Day back for a full-day presentation to our Sophomores and many of our faculty and staff. The experience was very well received by all who attended and we look forward to making Challenge Day an annual event because compassion, respect, and service are so central to their mission and ours.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> we held our annual Open House and welcomed 495 visitors, including 175 8<sup>th</sup> graders, to our biggest recruitment event. The feedback we received from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated Recruitment & Development staff, faculty and other staff members, as well as our wonderful, informative student tour leaders and talented student performers. We are also grateful to our loyal alumnae and Board members who volunteered their time and effort to support their alma mater.

We anticipate with enthusiasm and a sense of adventure what 2020 will bring to our Preston Family!

Sincerely,

Jane fundell

Jane Grendell, Principal



### **BARBARA MACMURRAY, PHS BOARD PRESIDENT:**

BARBARA MCMURRAY, LMSW was appointed President of the Board of Trustees of Preston High School by the Leadership Team of the Religious of the Divine Compassion effective September 1, 2019. A graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent and the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services, Ms. McMurray also holds certificates in Leadership and Executive Management from the Columbia University School of Not for Profit Management. She is retired from a career in social services, primarily in a management capacity at Cardinal McCloskey Community Services and has also worked in program development in services to women survivors of human trafficking. Currently, in retirement Barbara who is an Associate of the Divine Compassion, enjoys traveling and a wide range of volunteer activities. On joining the Preston Board of Trustees, Barbara notes, "I am honored to have the opportunity to work with the dedicated Board of Trustees, administration and staff of Preston High School and I am confident that together we can continue to provide girls with a high school experience which encapsulates the virtues of dignity, honor, respect and compassion for generations to come.

# INTRODUCING





Erica Mazurkiewicz '10 is currently one of 10 women out of 330 in the FDNY Academy training to become a firefighter. When she graduates in March, she will join the ranks of the 117 women out of 11,000 uniformed members.

#### - Members of the Class of 1998 celebrate their 25th **Christmas together!**

"We have Preston High School to thank for these amazing friendships. We are no longer friends but a family. We were in each other's weddings and are now godmothers to each other's children. This is our 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas party together; we never missed a year and never will."

#### Left to right:

Jean Zarnoch Kwartler Shannon Pisaniello Coscia Erin Mulligan Williams Krissy Caramele Riss **Danielle Visvader Pradas** Kimi Reina Becker Melissa Skrapits Wagner



Daniela Menchaca Rosario and her husband Angel welcomed their son Benjamin Daniel Rosario in July. She is currently sharing her journey through life on her blog "Rise to Motherhood."

► Laura Leich '05 received the Throggs Neck Volunteer Ambulance Corps Lifetime Membership Award and Legacy Award for her 10+ years of dedicated service to the community.



Erica Leich '01 and fiancé Tony Rubbico will be wed in May of this year in Lewes. Detroit.

HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? EMAIL GFRAGALE@PRESTONHS.ORG

**\*** In Loving Memory

**Rosalie Sarrica Gillmore '58** Margaret Mulhern '76

Patricia DeCristofaro | mother of Mary Ann Kelly '74

Joan Collins | mother of Jamie Skrapits McKillop and grandmother of Melissa Wagner '98 and Kelly Kempf '03

Ann Louise Richards '55

#### TO SHARE YOUR NEWS OR TO REMEMBER A LOVED ONE IN OUR NEWSLETTER, PLEASE EMAIL GFRAGALE@PRESTONHS.ORG

# **STUDENT** Spotlight

#### ROHM WILLIAMS-PEDRO SENIOR

Greetings Preston Alumnae! My name is Rohm Williams-Pedro, and I am currently a senior here at Preston, Throughout my four years, Preston has instilled in me what it is like to be a woman of dignity, honor, respect, and compassion. This has truly helped me grow over my years here, and definitely has contributed to my becoming Student Body President.

Freshman year is usually the hardest because of the transition from middle school to high school, but Preston helped make it as smooth as possible. Going to Boot Camp helped me make friends, and also gave me a sneak peek of what high school would really be like. On the first day of school I was ready to go and learn anything and everything. I was a closed-off person my first year, but as time went on I became more comfortable with the students and teachers, and they ultimately pushed me to become a leader.

Sophomore year. What a year it was. This was the year that I learned how much I actually dislike geometry, but it was also a year in which I had many ups and downs. Ultimately, sophomore year taught me a lot about myself, and a lot about the people I surround myself with. It was an eye opener to me and what I had to do to make my time at Preston High School as memorable as possible.

Junior year was the best year I've experienced at Preston. Although it's supposed to be one of the hardest because of the college process, the Guidance Department made it one of the smoothest. This is also the year I made the decision to run for junior class president, and won. I always think back to this moment because I remember as a freshman, I said that I would never run for a position in student government, but look at me now. The personal growth over two years has helped me come out of my shell, and be the voice for all.

Although I am still in the process of completing my senior year, it has been one of my hardest semesters vet. Trying to maintain my GPA. being student body president, and playing

varsity basketball (while also juggling my Independent Senior Project and the college application process) has been challenging to say the least, but the support I receive from my teachers and guidance counselors has made this process easier. Right now, I have applied to five schools and I am in the process of applying to eight more. I hope to become an orthopedic surgeon, then ultimately work as a team doctor on an NBA team. Preston has helped me come one step closer to living my dreams. It has helped me become a strong leader, and a woman of dignity, honor, respect, and compassion.

#### JENNA ZILITTO FRESHMAN

When I first walked into Preston. I was unsure of what to expect. I was nervous about finding my way between the main building and the mansion and especially not being able to get my locker open. Thankfully, the Freshman Bootcamp in the summer helped me figure out my way around the buildings and work on my locker-opening skills before school was in session. I also got to know a lot of my future classmates better and made some new friends.



Life since I started Preston has been a positive experience. I have made even more new friends, became a pro at opening lockers, and joined a lot of new clubs and activities – including the JV Cheerleading team. Life on a sports team gives you the opportunity to become more involved in the school and learn about the commitment to a team and striving to do well while learning to both lean on and support your teammates. Being on the cheerleading team has also helped me improve my time management skills Preston offers a lot of support in many ways. The teachers always hold extra help sessions after school for all of the classes and make sure that they are always there whenever you need them. My guidance counselors, teachers, and coaches have been very helpful throughout my transition from middle school to high school. I am so happy I chose to come to Preston and can't wait for the next three years!

#### CARILUZ MUNOZ FRESHMAN

My name is Cariluz Munoz and I am a freshman at Preston High School, Preston is an amazing school and I am grateful that I am getting the opportunity to attend this school. Although it has been a challenging adjustment from middle school to high school, I love knowing I have so much support from the staff and even from the students. From the clubs that I have joined, to the basketball team, to the challenging classes, I know that I have so many amazing people around me to rely on.

I am currently taking two honors classes, Algebra and Global History. I am also taking Spanish 2 with the sophomores. Although the classes have been very challenging for me, it helps knowing my teachers are willing to do whatever it takes to make sure I succeed by offering extra credit assignments and extra help whether it be an extra 20 minutes or even a full hour! That has really benefited me because I have basketball practice every day, so it is amazing that they work with my schedule to give me the help that I need and make sure I succeed.

As previously mentioned. I joined a few clubs including the Women Empowerment club, the Conspiracy Theory club and the Paws for Cause club. I am enjoying the clubs very much, and learning to balance my clubs with my academic and athletic schedules. The clubs have been a great way for me to meet many girls from different grades who always encourage me. I am proud that I tried out for the basketball team and made it! I also have one of the new lockers. It is very spacious and helps me stay organized. am so thankful for everyone who made these new lockers possible! This semester I was also able to make it to a volleyball game and was amazed to see how strong the sisterhood of Preston is. We all support each other through everything, iust like real sisters do.

Overall, my first semester at Preston has been challenging and exciting. The many moments full of laughter, love, and joy have showed me how lucky I am to be a Panther and forever a part of this amazing sisterhood. It is something that I know I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

# **ALUMNA** Spotlight



VANESSA JAVIER '02 After graduating from Preston in 2002, I started my college career at LaSalle University in Philadelphia before transferring to American University in Washington, D.C. Once there, I studied Public Relations and graduated Cum Laude with a B.A. in 2006. After graduation, I continued my internships at entertainment focused Public Relations agencies before I reached out to a college professor who steered me towards an Advertising agency that specializes in developing ad campaigns for Broadway shows. During my time at Preston, I was very involved in the musical and it was at PHS that my love for theater really grew. I loved the time I shared developing friendships and bonding over theatre but I never thought of it as a future career option for myself. Fortunately, I found a way to combine my love of theater with my college degree! I have now worked at Serino Coyne for 14 years starting as an Assistant Account Executive in the Account Management Department and

now a Group Director in the Account Management Department. In my time at the company I've had the pleasure of working on the Advertising Campaigns, inclusive of developing the art work and media planning, for a wealth of different companies/productions including Wicked, Jersey Boys, Beautiful, Lincoln Center Performing Arts, Gypsy, Hedwig & The Angry Inch, Of Mice & Men, One World Observatory, The Tony Awards and many more. At the moment, I oversee the advertising campaigns for the Disney Theatrical Productions on Broadway, The Lion King, Aladdin & Frozen. I am so thankful that I am able to work in a field that I am so passionate about, and credit my experiences at Preston for fostering that love of theater within me. I continue to support Preston by attending as many events as possible, especially the annual musical production! Currently, I reside in my hometown of the Bronx and am a mother of two: Adelina (5) & Adan (3).

**PATRICIA LAMBROU** '09 is the owner of Patty Pops in Pelham, New York. She credits Ms. Jennifer Connolly's economics class project as the start of her dream business. After doing research and creating a business model, she realized that her dream was very tangible. Through word of mouth, and social media marketing, Patty was able to grow a clientele and was soon booked up every weekend for special events like birthdays, showers, and even weddings, all while a senior at PHS. Soon after her business took off in senior year at Preston, she faced a decision to attend college in Boston, which would mean the end of her business, or stay local in order to keep her growing clientele. Ultimately, she decided to stay local and attended Fordham University in the Bronx majoring in accounting at Fordham's Gabelli School of Business, where the cake pop business took some time on the back-burner while she focused on her studies. After receiving her Masters in Taxation from Fordham's Graduate School of Business, she began her professional career



as a Certified Public Accountant at Ernst & Young LLP. While working in a corporate setting for over three years, the thought of starting her own baking business never left her mind. In 2017, she decided to take a leap of faith and devote her time to her business, Patty Pops. Patty credits Preston for fostering the foundation of her entrepreneurship through discipline, responsibility, and time management as well as instilling the values of kindness and compassion through leadership. She is thankful to Preston for teaching her how to accept challenges and grow from them. One piece of advice she would like to pass on to current Preston students is to find your passion and let it fuel you to

succeed in whatever it is you wish to accomplish.

ANNA LAURA ACCIARINO, PT, DPT, ATC '10 is a Preston High School alumna from the graduating class of 2010. She went on to graduate *Summa Cum Laude* with a Bachelor's Degree in Athletic Training in 2014, and Doctoral Degree in Physical Therapy in 2017 from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT. Honored with the *Silver Medal of Excellence in Doctor of Physical Therapy*, Anna has gained experience in evaluating and treating orthopedic injuries both on-and-off the field with a wide variety of collegiate and high school sports teams including: football, field/ice hockey, wrestling, soccer, basketball, lacrosse, volleyball, and track and field. Anna's 15-year background in dance drives her passion for movement. Growing up, she participated in multiple tap, jazz, ballet and lyrical dance competitions at Andrea's Dance Studio in Bronx, NY. At Preston High School, she became exposed to musical theater. She was a member of the *Preston Players*, where she performed in "42<sup>nd</sup> Street", "Thoroughly Modern Millie", and "The Pajama Game". Being a part of the *Preston Players* 

changed Anna's high school experience along with her future career. Combining her passions for physical therapy, dance and musical theater, she now works as a physical therapist for Broadway shows, professional ballet/modern dance companies, and actors/actresses from around the world. She loves her job and couldn't thank Preston enough for preparing her for the real world. P-H-S YES!

# **ALUMNA** Spotlight

### Our Golden "29<sup>TH</sup>"

#### AGNES MCNAMARA '70

On December 21, 1969, my class met for the traditional Senior Banquet. It was a wonderful Sunday evening before Christmas and we all enjoyed the yuletide spirit of sharing. Finally, this special time was ours! As the evening ended, I remember realizing that Christmas break would mean two weeks without seeing these dear friends. In an effort to keep this from happening, I offered to have our group meet at my house. The date was quickly decided- the 29<sup>th</sup> far enough from Christmas and not too close to New Years. And so, I said, 'the 29<sup>th</sup> at my house!' That first year we gathered on a Monday night at my parent's house on Calhoun Avenue. We laughed, talked, and looked forward to seeing each other back at school the following week. January came, and the weeks and months seemed to fly by. Before we knew it was June and we were suddenly alumnae.

In September, all of us went to different colleges. When I sat down to write my Christmas cards, I simply included, 'see you on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Amazingly, all arrived! That Christmas was very special, for although we each were in different places, there was a special bond, and we listened and learned about places we'd never been to and perhaps never would. When we gathered the following 29<sup>th</sup> the group had grown. Cathy had married and now brought her infant daughter, Dawn. It seeme unreal that at 20, one of us could be a mother. We could not have imagined how quickly life was passing, and that by December 1973, Terry, Pat, Sandy, and Joann would come to show us their engagement rings!

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that first 29<sup>th</sup>. Each married and now brought her infant daughter, Dawn. It seemed year, despite, rain, snow or sleet, we have gotten together to continue the tradition. What started at my parents' house has moved with us from my apartment in the Bronx to my home in New Rochelle. Now as we enjoy a special Joanne dessert and discuss social security, retirement and the joys of grandchildren, it is clear we have walked through life together. With each passing year came new chapters in our lives. Before The friendships that began 54 years ago when we entered long, Rachel, Lori and I were planning weddings too. The talk Preston remain untouched by the test of time. As we pose this year for the 50<sup>th</sup> picture in front of my Christmas tree, a turned to china patterns, honeymoons, apartment searching, and of course graduation. Then with college behind us, we flood of faces and memories flash before us. How blessed our gathered on the 29th, as professionals, nurses, lawyers, social lives have been because of those 4 wonderful years! For there workers, educators. Administrators. As our professional lives and then not only did we receive a strong Catholic educational grew, so did our personal lives. We were part of bridal parties, foundation. but, more importantly those seeds of friendship christenings, first communions, and children's graduations. were planted and promoted which have served to encourage Through the years, we shared the joys of raising children, and and empower us for a lifetime. the sorrows of burying parents.



In 2006, we experienced a special sorrow, as we laid our dear Pat to rest. In loving memory, we established the Patricia Langan Mrsich Scholarship for the Study of Law to be given out each year at graduation. Today, a tree bearing her name graces the lawn next to the porch where we so often stood.

# FACULTY Spotlight



**DORA DEKAJLO:** 

My Preston career started in 2002, some 17 years ago. From Freshman and Sophomore Theology teacher to PLEX Moderator (Preston Learning Experience) to Pax Christi (Non-violent Conflict

Resolution) assembly speaker and later teacher, to bookstore coordinator & yearbook moderator, to Compassion Connection moderator and now Chairperson of the Theology Department, I have enjoyed all my various roles at PHS.

As an educator, my greatest joy comes from being in the classroom teaching the Old Testament, allowing students to appreciate salvation history and to understand the context into which Christ entered the human realm! I enjoy knowing my students on a personal level and I make a point of getting to know each one individually. I write each student a personal letter when she leaves my class in June. It is a huge undertaking but it warms my heart to let each student know I have watched her grow over the past year together.

I moderate Compassion Connection (Co-Co) and have been involved in it since my first days at Preston. At first, I assisted Shana Kravatz, then co-moderated with Margaret Damo, and for years now, have been the lead moderator of Co-Co.

Co-Co does amazing work and has an annual membership of at least 100 students. Following Preston's mission, we work to see the needs and wants of others and fill those needs. During my tenure, the Food Drive has evolved from a collection of 10+ boxes of food to a drive that collects over 10,000 pounds of food. PHS's donation of food stocks 4 pantries and makes over 70 packages for families for the Thanksgiving holidays. In 2006, I started the tradition of a Food Drive Kick Off Assembly where the whole student body sings a current song with words altered to inspire the school to donate food. It is an anticipated and fun assembly! Co-Co does many additional projects, including making sandwiches for the homeless for Lamp Ministries, coordinating cookie grams to raise money for a children's hospital, and organizing Thanksgiving or

Christmas parties for Preston's Big Sister Little Sister Program. We also collect coins during lunch periods on Fridays, known as Food Fest Fridays, and we donate the coins to several different organizations who support the marginalized. I started the "Compassion Blog" on Preston's website, that automatically shows up on Preston's Facebook page because people should know about all of the amazing things that happen at PHS and something fantastic happens every single week!

Since my early years at Preston, I became very close with what came to be known as the "Birthday Club." Made up of women who lived and breathed Preston, this club taught me the legacy and history of Preston. The youngest in the group, I came to be inspired by them - Dr. Peg Morton, Margaret Damo, Mary Ahl, Marge McEvoy, Sr. Loretta, and Sr. Mary Ann Kinsella. 1 am proud to carry on the legacy they taught me each time I play "We Are the Family" (a song introduced to Preston by Dr. Morton) on the guitar after almost every Mass.

On a personal note, I am married to my husband Orest and have two sons: Damyan, a freshman in Holy Cross High School and Maksym, a 6<sup>th</sup> grader in St. Kevin's in Queens, NY. I am blessed to have both my parents and grandmother as well as my husbands' parents to share our lives with. Each one plays a vital role in my life and that of my husband and children.

I spend hours in the car driving between Queens, NY and the Ukrainian Community in the East Village and The Ukrainian Community in Newark, NJ. I enjoy working with the Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organizations, the St. Kevin's Parent Association, the Roma Pryma Bohachevsky Ukrainian Dance School, the Self Reliance Ukrainian Saturday School and I anticipate that I will be busy at Holy Cross as well. In the summer months, I enjoy getting away to "my happy place" - a Ukrainian village near Narrowsburg, NY where I have a simple cabin with a porch that is welcoming and never empty.

I am honored to have received the Distinguished Service award in 2010 for my work with Compassion Connection and The Distinguished Faculty Award in 2018. This place known as Preston has my heart and I

look forward to many more years of sharing my days with amazing students and faculty who know that "Compassion Matters" and they work to "Pass It On."

#### **ANITA WICKS:**

With six suitcases and her faith in God, Anita Wicks left Sri Lanka a widow in 2000 with two teens. She came to New York with the goal of getting her children an education.

She had taught biology and math at St. Joseph's, a Colombo Catholic school for boys. After living with the Ursuline Sisters in Mount Vernon for two weeks, she moved into a small apartment with her children. She started at Our Lady of Victory Academy in 2001.

Since coming to Preston in 2002, Ms. Wicks has shared her love for science. She began teaching biology, then added chemistry in 2006, finally developing a much-loved forensic science class in 2007. She served as chair of the department from 2007 to 2015.

Ms.Wicks' enthusiasm for Preston is seen through her results. The scores on last year's Chemistry Regents broke all previous records for reaching Mastery Level. Known for her tough love and sardonic humor, Ms. Wicks treats her students as her own, holding them to high standards because she knows they can reach them. She loves the relationships she forms with her students. Knowing that chemistry is a challenge for many, Ms. Wicks injects humor and jokes into her lesson in order to make the experience enjoyable.

Ms. Wicks cites Sr. Laura Donovan as her mentor. Sr. Laura, who at the time chaired the Science Department, helped Ms. Wicks adjust to the American system and the many challenges it presented. In 2009, Ms. Wicks received Preston's Distinguished Teacher Award.

Ms. Wicks lives in Yonkers with her husband, Richard, a forensic psychiatrist, whom she knew from childhood and met again after coming to New York. Both of Ms. Wicks' children have since received their Master's degrees. Her daughter works for the Port Authority as an accountant; her son is a systems designer in Perth, Australia – both a testament to her dedication and sacrifice.

# SCHOOLYEAR Snapshots



**CO-CURRICULAR FAIR:** 

Miss Columbus at the Morris Park Columbus Day Parade. Both alumnae and students including the cheerleading team and Italian club marched in the parade to represent PHS! Maria shared that she was proud to serve as Miss Columbus this year as it has always been a dream of hers. "Representing my community and family

**COLUMBUS DAY PARADE** Preston senior Maria Terzulli was crowned this year's was so important to me because they've always been there for me, and I wanted to show them I'm there for them too."

Students of all grade levels gathered in the cafeteria and the back porch after school on Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup> to learn more about the 30+ co-curriculars Preston has to offer. These include cultural clubs such as the Italian Club, Asian Club, and Caribbean Club, academic clubs such as QuizBowl and Chem Club, as well as Compassion Connection, Gospel Choir, the Preston Players, Art Club, and Panther Vision. Senior Leah Chin shared, "I always look forward to the co-curricular fair. From freshman year getting to learn about all of the different clubs and being able to try something new and meet new friends, to now getting the chance to take on a leadership role in those clubs as a senior, the clubs that I am a part of, especially the Preston Players and Gospel Choir, will be something I will always remember from my time at Preston."



**YOUNG ALUMNAE BRUNCH** The classes of 2016 to 2019 were invited back to Preston on January 8<sup>th</sup> to share their post-Preston experiences with faculty, staff, their peers, and the Class of 2020. The seniors asked the young alumnae about their college experiences which included dorming vs. staying

home, specific questions regarding majors of study, and how Preston had prepared them for college life and academics. It was a great chance for the seniors to hear first-hand from their peers who were in their shoes not too long ago.

"I had a great time at the Young Alum Brunch. It was really helpful to be able to hear about college from the perspective of girls who were in my exact position not too long ago. I'm looking forward to coming back next year to share what I've learned from my first semester with next year's seniors!"

- Vanessa Lopez '20

#### FRESHMAN FAMILY PICNIC



Freshman Family Picnic: Freshman students and their families gathered together on Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup> for Preston's annual Freshman Family Picnic tradition.

The Class of 2023 and their families mingled with each other and other PHS students, faculty, and staff on the beautiful fall day. The day began with celebrating Mass together as a community, followed by a light lunch and exciting relay races. Freshman Stephanie Fegel shared that "the freshman picnic was a lot of fun! I was happy to have my family meet my teachers and new friends and get the chance to spend some quality time together."



CHALLENGE DAY Preston sophomores and a number of faculty and staff participated in the school's first ever full-day Challenge Day on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. Challenge Day provides youth and their communities with experiential programs that demonstrate the possibility of love and connection through the celebration of diversity, truth and full expression. Challenge Day has reached more than 1.5 million youth and adults since 1987. The day-long experience strengthens emotional safety and social relationships, positively influences educational achievement, builds cross

cultural connections, and reduces conflict and bullying. All at PHS are grateful for the opportunity to have taken part in this incredible experience. Sophomore Kayla Casey-Engeldrum shared of her experience, "Challenge Day was a fun experience. It helped me be more open about things and ideas I wouldn't normally talk about. I may have cried a lot but it was nice to know that my friends were there but it was also surprising to see how many students and teachers have gone through the same or similar things as me. If I got the chance, I would love to do challenge day again."

**OPEN HOUSE** Preston held its annual Open House on Sunday, November 3rd, 2019. We welcomed many visitors through

*"I have been volunteering at Open* House and giving tours to prospective students and their families since my freshman year. I love Preston and love sharing my amazing experience and all the great things about Preston to future Panthers. I felt prepared before I came to PHS because of my older sisters who also went here, so I'm happy to be that person for other people by being a STAR ambassador and helping out at Admissions events like Open House."

- Aissatou Bah '21

our doors from all over the tri-state area and shared with them the academic, social, and spiritual programs that Preston has to offer from our college preparatory curriculum to our diverse student clubs and athletic teams. We received great feedback from students and parents who felt an overwhelming sense of community spirit not only from the wonderful faculty and staff but also from the many PHS students who volunteered to show our visitors what Preston is about.



The Class of 2020 kicked off their senior celebrations for their final year at Preston at the Senior Luncheon in December held at the Marina del Rey. The entire graduating class came together for an afternoon of food, dancing, and the beginning of some of their final celebrations as PHS students. Senior Nitzy Ramirez said "It was a wonderful and unique experience. I love

spending time outside the classroom with my classmates and being able to dress up. I know all of us felt beautiful and enjoyed that moment. It was a great start to the many senior traditions to come this vear."



#### **FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE**

Preston girls and the father figures in their lives danced the night away at the Marina del Rey in November. This time-honored tradition was enjoyed by daughters and fathers alike and gave everyone a chance to let loose and have some fun together! Senior Allie

Walsh and her father were crowned the King and Princess of the night and shared a special moment on the dance floor. At the end of the night, Allie shared, "I have been coming to Father-Daughter dances with my dad for the longest time, so I'm sad to see if end but I'm so glad we had such an unforgettable night as our last one! It will definitely be a great memory that I will look back on after | graduate."



**DISCOVERY DAY** While the sophomores participated in Challenge Day, the freshman class and their mentors explored the Museum of Natural History.

"The trip to the museum was so much fun! It was really nice to get out of the classroom and learn about things in a fun way. I haven't been to a museum in a really long time so it was a really cool experience."

- Giovanna Pirraglia '23

# THE PINK PANTHER Angel of Compassion Fund!

We are excited to announce that "The Pink Panther Angel of Compassion Fund" has been established to help fund a PHS student's tuition if she is in jeopardy of not being able to complete her education due to the lack of funding for tuition payments. A committee of PHS alumnae worked with PHS representatives to establish and launch the "Pink Panther Angel of Compassion Fund" beginning this year. Processes & criteria were written for granting aid, including that this fund will be utilized only after all other forms of financial assistance have been exhausted. We hope that you are as excited as we are about "The Pink Panther Angel of Compassion Fund" and we hope you will consider contributing to this fund, initiated by PHS alum. A \$10,000 initial donation has been made and we also have our first monthly

### SHARE YOUR FAVORITE PRESTON MEMORIES WITH US:

### **MOVIE DAYS WITH SR. MERCEDES**"

**SR. BETTY ANN ANNOUNCING BIRTHDAYS BY SAYING 'A SEAGULL** FLEW IN THROUGH THE WINDOW AND TOLD ME SOMEONE WAS **CELEBRATING A BIRTHDAY!**"

Preston High School initiative. Log onto http://www. prestonhs.org to donate today or to make a monthly donation! Press the "Donate" tab on the top right of the PHS website, type in a donation amount, open the (optional) box dropdown and click Scholarship Fund. Please consider making a monthly donation to build up this fund over the next year! A \$25 monthly donation will build into +\$250 in the next year! A \$100 monthly donation will build into +\$1000 in the next year! YOU will be considered a MAJOR DONOR to Preston High School and all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Who benefits? YOU(TH)

donor! We hope you will join in and be a part of this

Do you remember?

**GETTING THE DAY OFF AFTER PRACTICING FOR MARCHING IN** THE DIFFERENT PARADES"



# **RDC JUBILEE** *Congratulations*

Congratulations to the following Sisters of the Divine Compassion as well as former Preston Staff on their Jubilee years as RDC:

### **60<sup>TH</sup> JUBILEE CELEBRANTS:**

**Sr. Lucille Coldrick** (*pictured*)



Sr. Susan Greene Sr. MaryAnn Kinsella (pictured)



Sr. Gertrude Kallenbach Sr. Felicitas Russell Sr. Theresa Young

### **50TH JUBILEE CELEBRANT:**

Sr. Laura Donovan (pictured)



**25<sup>TH</sup> JUBILEE CELEBRANT:** Sr. Nga Bui

# COMPASSION **CONNECTION** Updates

ON NOVEMBER 26TH, Preston's National Honor Society hosted their annual in-school potluck! A total of 183 students and faculty donated to and attended this great event! All the food and entertainment were provided by the members of National Honor Society and its faculty council. Dr. Unger, National Honors Society's mentor, oversaw this very successful event. The proceeds, which came to a whopping \$841, will be donated to the Alzheimer's Association, the largest nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting for the victims of Alzheimer's, in honor of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, Monies donated will be used to provide education, research funding, advocacy, local support, and resources for families and professionals

in this great organization. Compassion doesn't take a fighting body, but a fighting heart, which Preston honorably helped to shine light upon ... Pass it on!



# **ATHLETICS** Updates

BASKETBALL: Congratulations to senior Emma Wilson-Saltos who has accepted a full-scholarship from Manhattan College to join their Division I basketball team.

CHEER: Preston High School's Varsity and Junior Varsity cheerleading teams took home first place for large non-tumbling group at the Rockville Center Regional Cheer Competition at Hofstra University the weekend of November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to Preston's cheerleaders and coaches!

**VOLLEYBALL:** Preston High School's Varsity Volleyball Team are the 2019 city champions! After a successful season led by head coach Joel Sanchez and assisted by alumna Aja Darboe '19. PHS finished strong by winning the championship game and being named the number one girls volleyball team throughout all of New York City. Congratulations, Panthers!



# FUNDRAISING **EVENTS**

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT:** Preston held its first Women's Empowerment Summit on Sunday, October 6th, where members of the community gathered for a motivational and spiritual day, for women of all ages, by women of all ages. Some of our presenters included PHS alumnae Pat Harris Palumbo '79, Patty Sanchez Franco '91, Stacy Luccioni Munch '84, Sr. Carol Wagner '69, Niomi Rupram '06, and Wyneisha Kinsey '10 as well as former Preston English teacher Erin Ponton Fiero. We look forward to hosting many more such events and hope many more will join us in the future!



Please feel free to contact Cristina Fragale, Senior Director of Recruitment and Development, to discuss any questions you may have regarding a donation to Preston High School.

HAUNTED MANSION: Preston High School held its fourth annual Halloween event on Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. This year, families were invited to celebrate Halloween at Preston with face-painting, balloon animals, cotton candy, pumpkin decorating, and carnival games during the day and a spooky tour through the mansion in the evening. Children of all ages joined in on the festive fun and many expressed their excitement for next

year's event! One of this year's attendees shared with News 12: the Bronx, "I have brought my children here every year since the event began! My younger son loves all of the activities and entertainment available from the magicians, games, face painting and balloon animals, and of course the cotton candy! My older daughter also comes every year to go through the haunted house with her friends and always has a great time! This is a great way to celebrate Halloween in a fun and safe way in the neighborhood."

# **Calling All Alumnae: PRESTON NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

### YOU ASK WHAT CAN YOU DO? THERE ARE SEVERAL OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO EACH ALUMNA.

- 1. Donate cash/check directly to Preston for a tax-free deduction on your income tax return;
  - 2. If you over age 70<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and you do not need or want to receive any portion of your required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA, under IRS Section 408(d)(8) of the IRS Revenue Code of 1986 (as amended), you can contribute directly to Preston from your IRA. You will then declare less taxable income;
  - 3. If your company offers employees the option to contribute to The United Way, you can name Preston as a recipient of your contribution. If Preston is not listed as a charity, you can write in Preston HS as a recipient;
  - 4. If you own large concentrated stock positions with a low-cost basis and don't need, or want to continue holding the stock, consider gifting a portion of, or all the shares to Preston, thereby avoiding your own tax consequences of directly selling the shares;
  - 5. As with any direct gift to any charity, check with your company to see whether they will match your gift to Preston;
  - 6. Participate in the many stand-alone programs that the Development Office offers such as the Locker Program, Mother's and Father's Day Remembrances and the Pillar Replacement Program, among others.

Of course, as always, we'd recommend that you talk to your tax advisor about the benefits of any charitable contribution to ensure that it makes financial sense for you.

Ladies, if you enjoyed your four years at Preston, start showing your support by using any of the above options so that other young girls experience the joys and rewards of the Maroon and White! We all owe it to Preston to ensure it continues providing religious and moral guidance to young girls in an increasingly challenging world.

> - Virginia Giuffre Class of 1961

### MISSION

Through a broad and challenging curriculum, a diverse, faith-centered community and a commitment to Christian service, Preston High School empowers young women by providing them with the skills needed to become compassionate leaders for change in their world.

### PRESTON HIGH SCHOOL ALMA MATER

Hail to Preston alma mater fair Banners high in triumph we raise Ever mindful of your loving care We will proudly sing your praise We will strive to keep your honor bright And we vow to add to your fame The maroon and white forever And the glory of your dear name Preston High We pledge our hearts to you Preston High To you we will be true March on, march on to victory!

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Cassandra Aquart '96 Michelle Benedetto '01 Laura DeMaria-DeMattia '92 Sr. Laura Donovan, RDC Geralyn Harty Giannini '74 Barbara MacMurray, President Janice Mastropietro '80 Dorothea Rodd '77 Sr. Carol Wagner, RDC Julia Wall Jane Grendell, ex officio

### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Principal | Jane Grendell, M.Ed. x 113 Assistant Principal of Academics | Cynthia Chambers, M.A., x 115 Assistant Principal of Student Life | Andrew Pipchinski, M.A., x 130 Assistant Principal for Administration | Dr. Judith Johnston, x 137 Registrar | Craig Youngren, M.A. x 196



### **OFFICE OF RECRUITMENT &** DEVELOPMENT

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# SAVE THE DATE 2020:

**THURSDAY-SUNDAY FEBRUARY 13-16<sup>™</sup> 2020:** Preston Players Present: *Once on this Island* 

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST, 2020: Luau Card Party

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH, 2020:** Alumnae Reunion Celebrating Classes ending in 5 & 0

**TUESDAY, MAY 5TH, 2020:** Golf Outing at Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course

### TELL US YOUR NEWS GFRAGALE@PRESTONHS.ORG



If you would like to RSVP or donate prizes, sponsorships or for more information, contact gfragale@prestonhs.org.