

### PRESTON HIGH SCHOOL

#### LOCKER REPLACEMENT CAMPAIGN



After 50 years, Preston needs to replace the lockers throughout the school!

\*\*Please\*\* consider a \$100 gift that honors the past and Preston's future and that will create a lasting legacy for someone important to you.

# Be a part of this much needed initiative!

In recognition of your generosity, we will inscribe a nameplate on your memorial locker. Consider creating a memory while supporting PHS by honoring or memorializing:

- Your parents, your alum daughter or even yourself
- · A friend, classmate, team or club, teacher, coach or moderator
- · A beloved Sister of the Divine Compassion

#### PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Donor's Name:		500000000000000000000000000000000000000
Address/City/State/Zip		
Email:	Cell:	
One name or one family name	per locker: Jane Doe `51 or The	Doe Sisters or The Doe Family
Inscription 1 - \$100		
Inscription 2 - \$200	**********	00000000
Inscription 3 - \$300		
Inscription 4 - \$400		200000000000000000000000000000000000000
Check Enclosed Cree	dit Card: Name	
CC Number:	Exp. Date:	Sec. Code:
or visit ww	w.prestonhs.org to replace a le	ocker on line.
Thank you so me	ch! The Maroon	& White Forever!



#### Dear Preston Family and Friends,

We were delighted by the very enthusiastic response to the most recent edition of Preston Echoes Revisited, our revamped alumnae newsletter. Thank you for your support. We hope you will enjoy this current edition just as much. Please keep sending in updates about the happenings in your lives so that we can share the news with the rest of the Preston community.

In this issue you can read about the many exciting Preston events that have occurred in recent months and in the waning days of this academic year. Even as we are wrapping up academic year 2018-19, we're busy planning for the new academic year and the arrival of the Class of 2023!

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, we bid farewell to 118 newly minted graduates under sunny skies. Almost half the Class of 2019 earned the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, while 92% of the class earned college scholarships and grants totaling over \$37.5 million dollars, a new record for PHS. These statistics demonstrate yet again that an investment in a Preston education pays significant dividends for our graduates. It was heartwarming to hear Ariana Pizzo, our Valedictorian, and Zenaida Perez, our Salutatorian, speak of their alma mater with great affection and point to our core values of Dignity, Honor, Respect and Compassion as qualities that they will carry with them as they move forward with their lives.

Service to others is a key element of our mission, so much so that we require our freshmen to provide a minimum of 20 hours of service to their families during the school year. Our sophomores are required to provide a minimum of 20 hours of service to our school; and our juniors must provide a minimum of 40 hours of service to their community. It says a lot about our students' commitment to service that our juniors put in a total of 5,076 hours of service this year; students in grades 9 to 11 together put in over 10,000 hours of service; and many of our seniors, who are no longer are required to do service, continue volunteering at their service sites.

Summer at Preston is a fairly busy time for us. In July we hosted rising 7th and 8th grade girls participating in our Project Prep program which introduces them to Preston through academic skill-enhancing activities that make learning fun. In August, we conduct our Academic Boot Camp which assists our incoming freshmen in making the transition from middle school to high school. Of course, we also tackle the many tasks required to ready our buildings, our classrooms and offices for the influx of new and returning students in September. This summer, that includes swapping out our current technology (computers, laptops, Smartboards, servers, etc.) for new, up-to-date hardware and software, and upgrading the infrastructure that supports it all. And starting Tuesday, June 18th and continuing through Tuesday, October 29th (4PM-7PM, weather permitting) we will once again host a Farmers Market on our premises. If you find yourself in the area, please stop by to check out the fresh fruit, vegetables and baked goods available for purchase from local farms and stop by, if you have the time, to say hello.

I hope that you enjoy this Summer 2019 edition of our newsletter. Best wishes for a wonderful summer! God bless you,

Mrs. Jane Grendell, Principal

are Kundell



Preston's 68th graduating class processed across the South Lawn on a beautiful sunny Saturday, June 1, 2019. One hundred and eighteen young women partook in the traditional graduation ceremony on the back porch of Preston's beloved Mansion where they listened to inspiring speeches by the Class Valedictorian and Salutatorian, as well as keynote speaker Vinnie-Marie DeMarco Leone, PHS '99, before receiving their diplomas. As is Preston tradition, the alumnae mothers presented their daughters with their diplomas. Graduates and their alumnae mothers included Janine Cappiello Bracco '82, mother of Adriana Lyn Bracco, Joann Braun Karakatsanis '86 mother of Olivia Braun, Phyllis Rendino Criscione '84, mother of Alyssa Criscione, Joanne Gannon '83, mother of Katie Anne Gannon, Maria Rapaccioli Garvin '82, mother of Marisa Garvin, Ann Marie Braun Palompelli '91, mother of Olivia Palompelli, Janeen Garcia Ruzzi '88, mother of Natalia Ruzzi, and Lori Peterson '90, mother of Brianna Rose Tarul, Principal Jane Grendell welcomed the families and friends of the graduates who filled the South Lawn to commend the Class of 2019 before Salutatorian Zenaida Perez, who will be attending Iona College in the fall, addressed her peers and reflected on their years together. Valedictorian,

Ariana Pizzo, who will be attending Fordham University in the fall, delivered her Valedictory address to her fellow graduates. She shared, "1,361 days ago, we came to this school with different experiences, different backgrounds, different stories to tell, and so much to share. We leave here today as sisters, forever united through our bonds and experiences at Preston. We are the class of 2019. And we are ready to take on the world with dignity, honor, respect, and compassion."

This year marks another year of academic success for Preston as 100% of the graduates were accepted into institutions of higher learning. This was also a record-breaking year with members of the Class of 2019 earning over \$37.5 million in scholarships and grants. Two of our graduates, Adriana Bracco and Ashley Davis, earned \$1 million in scholarships and grants individually, and Blessing Njoku earned \$2 million. Of the 6 students recognized by the Archdiocese of New York as "Million Dollar Scholars, three were Preston students. This year's graduates also broke records with the majority of students receiving Advanced Regents Diplomas.

Congratulations to the Class of 2019!





◆ Jessica Ziliani '10 married Rocco Miano 3/24/2019

Michelle Palmiero Rella '10 married Guy Rella in November 2018

Jamie Fitzpatrick Morena '10 married AJ Morena in May 2019

Nicole Cavigliano married Sean McArdle in November 2018

Jessica Kerrigan Collazo '10 welcomed baby girl Leilah Grace with husband George Collazo

Jackie Mercado Nord '03 and Marcos welcomed daughter Amelia in February



Rosa Porelli Bailo '01 and Damir welcomed son Luca James on 2/8/2019. Big brother Joev turned 2 in October.

Ana Gema Monge '06 and Franco Rojas welcomed their son Mateo Humberto Vitaliano Rojas Monge in June



◆ Karen Guzman Wszolek '04 and Christian Wszolek welcomed their son Luke Wszolek in June



◆ Stephanie Loretta '08 was honored by District 11's UFT office as an outstanding guidance counselor. She has been a school counselor for the past three years at P.S. 83 in Morris Park. "I was honored to accept this award in front of my amazing family and friends and among 600 educators from District 11."

▶ Susan Amore Lembo '05 and Jillian Constantine Salerno '02 were honored for their excellence in education by the Forum for Italian American Educators.

Annalea Canzoniero Ricci '62 was honored at the 31st Annual Holy Child Benefit at the end of April for her many years of dedication to the Holy Child community. Annalea graduated from Preston High School in 1962 and returned as the

Science Department Chair from 1977 to 1987. She then went on to teach and chair the Science Department at Holy Child for nineteen years. Beloved by students, parents, and her colleagues alike, the yearbook was dedicated to her many times and she was the graduation



speaker in 1998. Annalea received the Preston Annalea Ricci '62 (4th from right) High School distinguished alumna award in 2012. During her years at Holy Child, Annalea served the school in myriad roles, including Upper School Dean, Chair of the Middle States' accreditation process, and Faculty Advisor to the National Honor Society and Student Government. Annalea has been a strong supporter of both Preston High School and Holy Child, and we are very proud and grateful for her never-ending compassion and for exemplifying the Preston spirit.



Morgan Sweeney | Father of Shannon Sweeney '04

Gabrielle Grace | Daughter of Ellen Donovan (1990-1993), niece of Kathleen Donovan DeFedele '86, Patricia Donovan '85, Elizabeth Donovan Olinto '87

Elizabeth "Liz" D'Abbraccio '82

Andrew "Bob" Massa, aka Bullet | Grandfather of Kimberly Carfora Montaldo '03 and Kristen Carfora '05

Patricia T. Shiels | Mother of Patricia Shiels Goldhach '77

Frank Zodl and Eleanore Zodl | Parents of Fran Zodl Dziuma '70, Grandparents of Alexandra Dziuma Orth '03, Erica Dziuma '04, Katherine Dziuma Cavigliano '08

Francis J. Lyons | Father of Terry Lyons '77,

Miriam Donovan and John Donovan | Parents of Mariann Donovan Walsh '77, Aunt and Uncle of Noreen Donovan Roth '78

Georgia Cestaro '56

Kathleen Quinn O'Connell '62

Ellen Tufaro '65

Teodora "Dorina" Mitarotonda | Mother of Maria Mitarotonda Cipollone '80

Keith Green | Father of Lisandra Green '04

Elizabeth Garvey '59

Sandra Davis PHS student from 1993-1996

# ALUMNAE Spotlight

#### **LAURA VULAJ'04**

Laura Vulaj serves as Senior Vice President & Director of Sustainability at SL Green Realty Corp., an S&P 500 Company and New York City's largest commercial office landlord responsible for developing One Vanderbilt, which will be the tallest commercial office tower in Midtown. In her current role, Laura reports to SL Green's Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for overseeing special projects, program management, and strategic initiatives within operations, property management, construction, and human resources. She manages the analysis, development, and execution of key initiatives with a focus on operational efficiencies. Laura is also responsible for managing SL Green's Sustainability program and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) initiatives. Laura joined SL Green in 2012 and previously held the positions of Associate and Vice President. Laura is a LEED Green Associate and a member of the Real Estate Board of New York and the Urban Land Institute. She also serves as a member of the Board of Directors for Urban Green Council. Laura is a mentor for American Corporate Partners (ACP), which connects service members and veterans with corporate

professional guidance during their military transition process. She has led fundraising efforts for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund and oversees an annual internship program at SL Green in partnership with The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City. Laura earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Northeastern University in Boston, MA.

# 'IOLANI LIGHTBOURNE BULLOCK, DIRECTOR OF MBA ADMISSIONS, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, AND PARTNERSHIPS AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'S MCDONOUGH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS' 04

'Iolani works to help people achieve their career goals by obtaining an MBA degree. She is passionate about cultivating talent and helping underrepresented groups gain access to opportunity. 'Iolani currently oversees global MBA recruitment, diversity strategy, partnerships and admissions events at the McDonough School of Business. Prior to joining the admissions team, she worked as a recruiter on Wall Street for five years, most recently managing MBA investment banking recruitment for Morgan Stanley. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study where she concentrated in African studies, communications, and marketing. In May of 2018 she graduated from Georgetown with her MBA. In her spare time 'Iolani enjoys traveling and has visited 40 countries thus far, however, she feels that her greatest adventure is being a mom to her 6-month old son Lenox.



#### **ALIMA CHOWDHURY '12**

Alima is a member of the Peace Corps and is currently part of the Pelle program in Ethiopia. For the past year, she has been teaching high school English and History as well as elementary and middle school children with the Catholic missionaries. Alima received her Bachelor's degree in Speech Pathology and Special Education from Pace University. During her time in Ethiopia, Alima has hosted various clubs and camps for young girls and conducts therapy for children with language, hearing, and speech delays. Alima credits her time at Preston, specifically her involvement in Compassion Connection, for inspiring her to join the Peace Corps and instilling in her the importance of service to others. She looks forward to continuing her service in Ethiopia for the next few years and creating more unforgettable memories with her students.

# STUDENTS Spotlights

#### ARIANA PIZZO '19 VALEDICTORIAN

One of my first memories
that I can recall while
at Preston was Mr.
Cooper's "unusual"
way of celebrating
each student's birthday.
I can still picture sitting
in Room 4 for his Theology
class. As I quietly sat at my
desk in front of the entire class,

Mr. Cooper began singing happy birthday. His happy birthday always consisted of slamming a large textbook on the desk, and while he was ending the song, he slammed the textbook so hard it broke the desk! It was at that moment that I knew Preston was no ordinary high school. I was ready for the crazy roller-coaster that the next few years would inevitably be. Since then, I have enjoyed multiple Step-Up Days with my friends, Christmas parties with the freshmen while I was a Junior Ambassador, singing along to each year's Preston Food Drive song, the many jokes students would crack with teachers inside and outside the classroom, and so much more. Along the way, I have been able to accomplish some of my most memorable achievements. Undoubtedly, my greatest achievement was becoming valedictorian; however, looking back, it was the smaller feats that enabled me to reach beyond my greatest dreams. Since freshman year, I was able to maintain the highest average of my class. In addition, I earned first place in multiple subjects and have maintained leadership positions such as Junior Ambassador, VP of Italian Honors Society, and VP of Transfers. It is because of these achievements that I kept pushing myself and remained motivated to attain my goals.

This Fall, I will be attending Fordham University. I will be starting on their pre-health track, which will require me to take challenging classes such as Biology and Chemistry during my freshman year. My interest in the medical field can largely be attributed to my time spent at Preston. Since my freshman year Biology Honors class with Mr. Trosa, I have developed a passion for science which has allowed me to discover more about myself and what I truly love. I continued on my path at Preston, setting my mind to excelling in the most challenging science

courses. I am proud to say that I finished with the highest average in Biology Honors, Chemistry, and Anatomy and Physiology placed second in AP Biology. It is because of Preston's support system and each educator's passion for teaching that I have the solid foundation I will need to succeed at Fordham. I have learned time management, how to keep up with heavy workloads, and (courtesy of the 80-minute block schedule) a glimpse

into how to manage those never-ending classes we all dread! Most importantly, during my time spent at Preston, I learned who I was as a person. I entered Preston as a timid freshman seeking new experiences and friendships that would last a lifetime. I left as a compassionate leader for change; with the traits of dignity, honor, respect and compassion under my belt, I was equipped to take on the next chapter of my life (and, of course, I now had my sisters by my side).

#### ZENAIDA PEREZ '19 SALUTATORIAN

It is surreal to think that the girl who walked into Preston four years ago, teeming with fear and worry, is the woman writing this article. I could not have dreamt a better high school experience. Preston did not meet any of my expectations for high school, yet it somehow surpassed them. I walked in as a timid girl who did not want to create any waves, and I am walking out a fearless, compassionate, and hardworking woman ready to confront any obstacles, seize all opportunities, and live out the values that Preston instilled in me. Before, if I was asked who I am. I would have stammered and shrugged my shoulders. Today I will proudly say that I am a Preston girl, and I am

Freshmen year, I remember the knots that formed in my stomach every day for the first few weeks of school. Not knowing what each day would bring terrified me. I would prepare for the next day as much as possible, anticipating quizzes, homework assignments, and other unexpected things. Although it was nearly impossible to keep up with my "expect the unexpected" mindset, it

ready to let all my future endeavors reflect this.

gave me a sense of relief, which alleviated the "new school" anxiety that troubled me Freshman year. I joined a few clubs and dabbled in a few outside activities but nothing stuck, probably because I was overly concerned with my studies. My teachers and my guidance counselor, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, recognized that I was constantly anxious, and helped me manage my life better. They took me under their wings and helped me, though I was too embarrassed to seek help. This is one of the reasons I will miss Preston dearly, as there is no other community as tight-knit and family-oriented.

My sophomore year, I was inducted into the National Honor Society, the National English Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, and the Preston Scholars Program. The mission of these societies appealed to me, as I was able to see firsthand how Panthers take care of one another. I admired how the underclassmen were actively seeking help and trusted in us to tutor them. Even more, I loved tutoring them, because I was able to share my studying techniques, memory devices, and advice. Tutoring became "my thing" and something I would enjoy the rest of my Preston years.

Junior year, I continued my service with the honor societies and joined *Preston Echoes*,

where I would write editorial pieces for the school newspaper. Also, I fell in love with English and vowed to become as smart and worldly as Ms. Forlini.

I will be attending Iona
College, as a member of
the Honors College, this
coming Fall. Iona was not even
a contender for me until I learned
of their Honors Program. I applied

spontaneously the day before the application was due. I received an email from my counselor, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, that lona's admissions staff were raving about my application essay and thought I'd be a good fit. I was really impressed by the personal way they treated their applicants. It felt like Preston to me, and I knew I couldn't go wrong. I will be an education major with a concentration in English, and I'm hoping to return to Preston and join the teachers on the 2nd floor of the mansion.

# FACULTY Spotlights

#### **MARGE McEVOY**



Mamaroneck is a benevolent, non-profit organization that supports and recognizes the student athletes in the community, as well as the coaches and other outstanding individuals at various times throughout the year. I was one of two recipients of the "Through the Years Award," along with another MHS Track coach, Bob Morrissey. I was both humbled and honored to receive the recognition by the Old Timers' Association. We did agree that it was interesting that two coaches of Irish decent were chosen to be recognized at the St. Patrick's - St. Joseph's Dinner! No coincidence there!

It was a dream of mine to be able to come back and coach at Mamaroneck. I have been coaching Track and Field at Mamaroneck High School, my Alma Mater, since 1982. I competed all four years while I was in high school and also in college. I immediately found my niche in the Spring of my Freshman year. I ran the middle distances, threw the discus and later became a high jumper. I joined the faculty at Preston in the fall of 1985 and was intent on holding on to my coaching position. Two separate times I tried to get Track going at Preston, but it had to be either before school (6:30 AM) in the mid '80's, or late (6:30 PM) in the mid '90's. Those times yielded very low numbers and we found that it just wasn't the right time, pun intended!

Track and Field at Mamaroneck HS has been in the news quite a bit over

the past 10 years or so. We have had more than a few athletes qualify for the State Meet, and a few even won medals and won their events. The teams also competed and won at the Nationals too.

Our three coaches work with the boys and girls from the high school, as well as some very talented 8<sup>th</sup> graders. That's Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity! This Spring Season we had almost 200 on our roster.

Over my 38 years I have coached student-athletes in just about every event during the three seasons of Cross Country (Fall), Indoor and Winter Track and Spring Track and Field. For 25 vears I was on the Section One Winter Track and Field Committee and was the recording secretary for about 10 of those years. Recently I have been working with our sprinters and throwers. Track is a great sport! You get immediate feedback as to how you performed (your time or distance) and you aren't waiting for the coach to put you into the game. but instead you're able to compete and compare your time, etc. to your last competition or nowadays you can go on-line and see where you rank in your league, section, state or the country! It's relatively inexpensive, too. You just need a pair of running shoes! This is a sport you can really do for the rest of your life!

I coached the Junior Varsity Volleyball team here at Preston from 1996 to 2011. I truly enjoyed that as well, but I saw that it was time to get new, young blood into the program. I am very proud to have worked with the Preston Panthers in a setting other than the Physical Education class. I have great memories and stories and even a few championship banners.

#### **ROSEMARY DEMAIO**

Congratulations to Italian teacher and foreign language department chair, Ms. Rosemary DeMaio, on being honored by the Forum for Italian American Educators (FIAME) and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Dept. Chair for her many years of excellence in education. Rosemary DeMaio is a resident of the Bronx. Her parents, Rita and Antonio Fava, were born in Italy. She graduated from Iona College with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Elementary Education and a major in Italian. She obtained a Master of Science degree in Secondary and Special **Education from the College** of New Rochelle. She later obtained professional certifications in Italian and in Spanish. She has been teaching at Preston High School for 11 years. She taught both Italian and Spanish. This year she became the Chair of the (L.O.T.E) Department. Rosemary taught for 24 years at the preschool, elementary, middle, and junior high school levels in mainstream classes before coming to Preston. She also taught adult education in the evenings. It was her dream to teach Italian, her first language. In 2007, she was hired to teach at Preston High School. She has been the moderator of both the Italian Club and the Italian Honor Society at Preston for 11 years. She was fortunate to have taught, and mentored, 5 winners of the Miss Columbus Pageant and 13 winners of the FIAME scholarships. She also had the honor to see students of Italian win \$295,900 in scholarships between 2009-2019. She is very fortunate to have a wonderful family. Rosemary works with her brother, Mario, the Director of Finance at Preston. She is so lucky to teach what Continued on page 11

SR. JOAN O'SULLIVAN, RDC, PSY.D., '52:

# TURNING POINTS

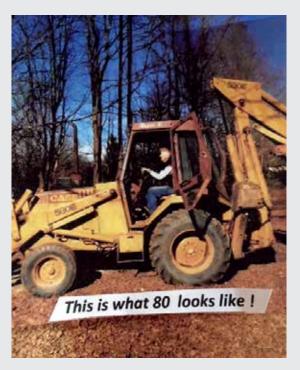
"tell me what it is you plan to do with your one, wild, and precious life?" Mary Oliver. There were not many options for women back in 1952. One could be a wife, mother, nurse, teacher, secretary, or nun. I was not a scholar; my passions were basketball and horses, so maybe Divine Intervention prompted me to join the RDC community, to at least give it a try; there was nothing to lose! Now, 65 years later, I have discovered that there were many turning points in life. The key was to be aware of what I wanted to do with this "one, wild, and precious life?"

Before three years had passed in the novitiate, my first turning point was the decision to stay an RDC, take vows, and live them. That was a good choice, for me. I developed a focus in life and values to live by. I had strong women as mentors and role models. I became "Sister Mary Victoire," even though I had failed French. My first assignment was to teach first grade at St. John's School in Mahopac. I discovered that I loved teaching! I taught there for six years and then moved on to St. Joseph's in Croton Falls, and Holy Name in Valhalla. Believe it or not, I'm still in touch with a few former students.

Next, I was assigned as principal of St. Mary's School in Katonah, which was another turning point, another challenge. I learned that all children are not alike in learning. Every child is special, and while teaching styles may differ, care is critical for success when matched with the learning needs of students.

When the next significant turning point presented itself, I was ready to grow. "Project Mainstream" was a federally funded program designed to develop ways of integrating children with special needs (can't read, can't write, can't process information) in regular classrooms. Many of those children were relegated to self-contained classes. That Project became the foundation of Public Law 94-142 in 1976 which required all schools to include students with disabilities in regular classes where possible. The law demanded that after a review, children with special needs could be 'mainstreamed' into appropriate classes to encourage integration with non-handicapped students. For me, that experience yielded a Master's degree in Learning Disabilities from NYU.

I have always considered those three years a gift because they opened a whole new field of teaching for me, Special Education. The outcome led me to spend the next twenty years in service to students with



academic and social—emotional deficits. I became convinced that the inability to read or write or behave appropriately is influenced not only by environmental factors, but also by many underlying psychological factors. I earned a doctorate in psychology from Pace University in 1991. To my surprise, for the first time in my life I won an academic award for 'excellence in research' for my work on my dissertation!

Not long after, my inner core told me that the next turning point was to return home to Good Counsel to join the staff of the RDC Center for Counseling and Human Development as a psychologist. This was the best team of mental health professionals I had ever met. They reflected competent, cohesive, and compassionate service! I enjoyed those years with a greater sense of ministry than ever before.

In 2012 my restive nature took me to yet another *turning point*. I needed to work with my hands and I needed to work outdoors to somehow return my personal gifts to the God that created a beautiful earth! That opportunity came when an old friend of mine died and left me a junk yard of 3.5 acres in the country. That gift became "The Earth Restoration Project."

The Project is finished now. It took five years with the help of many friends and helpers. The land was restored as a beautiful pasture, woodlands, and a fresh water well, as well as a sense of contributing something worthwhile to God's beautified earth.

Other turning points are inevitable. Retirement comes with a deep sense of gratitude to God and the RDC Community for a "one, wild, and precious life," with faith in whatever comes next!

# FACULTY Spotlights continued

Continued from page 9 she loves in a school filled with great people who have become her second family. Rosemary is very passionate about giving back to the community and organizes many charitable opportunities for the Italian Club. Italian Honor Society. and her Italian classes such as dinner with senior citizens, Festivale Culinario, and much more. "I love to teach at Preston because I enjoy teaching Italian and I believe strongly in their mission of excellence and compassion." The quote "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn" by Ignacio Estrada is one that she strongly believes in and strives to follow when educating the young women of Preston High School.

#### JOHN DILLON

John Dillon, a respected member of our Science Department for the past twelve years and former Chair of the department, retired at the end of the 2018-19 academic year. He is a proud graduate of Manhattan College where he earned his Bachelor's degree in Biology. Teaching was his second career, which he took up after working in the pharmaceutical industry for over 25 years. Reflecting on his decision to change careers, he said, "...Preston was a place where I could share my love for science with young people in a Catholic school setting. Preston felt very much like a home and family to me."

Asked to reflect on his years of teaching at PHS, John responded, "My favorite thing about teaching at Preston... is when a student suddenly understands a science concept. I love the 'aha' moment that I can see

on their faces when they

'get' it. It can make your whole day or even week!"

In retirement John looks forward to enjoying time with his own family, especially with his parents, and he considers himself lucky to still have them around. John and his wife Jennifer also plan to start doing some traveling as well.

We are grateful to John for his years of dedicated service to his students, for his leadership of the Science Department and for his support of his faculty colleagues.

#### **JOHN HAYES**

John Hayes, who taught both Theology and Music at Preston, also announced his "semi-retirement," effective at the end of academic year 2018-19. In addition to his teaching duties, he served as one of our Campus Ministers and oversaw our Christian Service program for a time. Trained as a professional musician, he took on responsibility for the Gospel and Liturgical choirs, provided the musical accompaniment for our liturgies, and served as musical director for the Preston Players' production of Sister Act in 2018. John earned his B.A. in Psychology from the City College of New York and his Master of Divinity degree from Regis College, the Jesuit theological school at the University of Toronto. As he reflected on his Preston experience, John wrote, "Preston offered a space where I hoped that I

could guide students to a richer understanding of their faith as well as helping them to move more deeply into a meaningful relationship with God. I pray that I did so for some and also

did the same with my music."

Mr. Hayes paid tribute to Preston's faculty and staff, saying "I am grateful for the support and encouragement that I have experienced from them during me time [at PHS]. Many of them were an inspiration to me with the skills and versatility they brought to their craft....I will especially miss my colleagues in the Theology Department. We have journeyed together through some tough but primarily joyful times. Whatever the situation, however, we were able to weather anything with a laugh. And, boy, have we had some great laughs!"

As for what's next for Mr. Hayes, he is delighted not to "be chained to an alarm clock that goes off at 5:00AM, five days a week," and looks forward to taking a "substantial vacation" for the first time in 10 years. "Whatever the Divine Presence still intends me to do and directs me toward, I will always be blessed with the gift of my time and experiences at Preston High School. It is the young students I have taught with all their personalities, their potential, their questioning of life, their developing selves, and their buoyant spirits that have inspired me and taught me more than I could ever have taught them. That, I will miss the most. Yet, wherever I am, whenever I can, I will return to Preston, I'm certain, to be renewed and inspired by the spirit of the young ladies there, who are the reason we teachers love and continue to do what we do."

We will certainly miss Mr. Hayes daily presence here at PHS, along with his deep kindness, his many talents which he gladly put in service to our school community, and his deep dedication to his students. God bless you and thank you, John!

### 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

SENATOR BIAGGI VISIT: State Senator elect Alessandra Biaggi addressed our students on the importance of young women taking an active role in their community and encouraged them to become leaders for change by actively participating in their community. Ms. Biaggi shared steps that this next generation of young women could utilize to get involved in their local government. She also focused on women's empowerment and emphasized that our students have the power to accomplish their goals.

This March, the Preston Players performed As You Like It: A Shakespeare-Inspired Musical under the direction of Mr. Steve Abel, who celebrated directing his tenth consecutive show at Preston. Mr. Abel drew inspiration for this one-of-a-kind production from popular songs throughout the decades and related them to the classic Shakespeare play. Senior Katie Gannon, who played Rosalind shared how much this production meant to her and how being cast in the iconic role of Rosalind affected her senior year. "Playing Rosalind was such an amazing experience for me. I'm so grateful to Mr. Abel for giving me this opportunity and guiding me in becoming Rosalind." Senior Paloma Chrissotimos, who played Orlando, explained the impact that being a member of the Preston Players made on her high school experience. "I have been a part of the Preston musical from my freshman year. I have danced all my life so I knew auditioning for the musical was something I wanted to do. I am grateful for the strong impact, the lessons, the friendships and unforgettable memories."



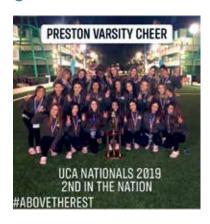
#### MOTHER DAUGHTER BRUNCH

The Mother Daughter Brunch is a wonderful PHS tradition.
This year, daughters and the important women in their lives celebrated their love for each other over brunch and dancing at the Marina del Rey. Amy Bruno Labbate '91 shared, "The Mother

Daughter Brunch is a beautiful tradition at Preston that means so much to me as an alumna and parent of an alumna and a current student. Being able to share in PHS traditions with my

daughters means so much to me."





19 cheerleaders from Preston High School competed in the UCA National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida. The season began strong at the UCA Northeast Regional back in November, where the cheerleaders earned first place and an automatic bid to Nationals. Throughout their season, the team has earned three first place trophies. In addition to moving on to finals, the

team also placed second in their division earning them a large trophy, silver medals, and the rank of 'Second in the Nation' in Large Varsity Non-Tumbling. Their successful season would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work from their coaches, Lori Finelli, Alyssa Finelli, and Gabrielle Vitiello, athletic director, Jamie Skrapits, school and administration, parents, and sponsors.

During Preston's Spring Break a group of 15 girls traveled to Spain and Portugal under the guidance of two of our Spanish teachers, Señora Varela and Señora De Los Santos. Tours ranged from visiting beautiful sights such as the Royal Palace of Madrid and Seville Cathedral to visiting the Alhambra in Granada and experiencing a night of Flamenco Dance.

Junior Vicqueline Escalona said, "This trip was the best way to spend my spring break with my friends! Being able to immerse myself in a new culture and practice my Spanish with the locals was an experience I'll never forget. I'm so grateful to

forget. I'm so grateful to Preston for this wonderful opportunity!"



Lock-in is an annual event where a school-wide sleepover takes place in the gym the weekend after midterms. It is a night of delicious food, endless snacks, and music and dancing provided by a DJ. This exciting and memorable tradition at PHS was voted as one of the "Top Ten Traditions You Wish Your High School Had!" by Seventeen Magazine. The Lock-In has been a favorite memory of Preston students and continues to be a great night of fun and de-stressing after a long week of mid-term exams! 2018-2019 Student Council President Byanca Moore '19 stated "Lock-In is one of my favorite memories from Preston. It's a great chance to let loose and have fun with your friends and even make new friendships. It's like one big giant sleepover with all of the games, dancing, and of course endless pizza and snacks!"



#### THE EMMAUS RETREAT

The Emmaus retreat is a longstanding Preston tradition where juniors and seniors are given the opportunity to go away on a 3-day

religious retreat with a few Preston faculty and staff chaperones. This year's chaperones included Theology teacher Lisa Cornelius, Music teacher John Hayes, History teacher Ashley Wnuk, and Recruitment and Development team member Grace Fragale '10. Grace was an Emmaus team leader her senior year at Preston and shared with the girls how meaningful it was for her to be able to experience this incredible tradition both as a student and as an employee of Preston. "The Emmaus retreat was one of my most memorable experiences of high school and was something I carried with me throughout college and beyond. I feel so blessed that I was given the opportunity to mentor my Emmaus sisters as a chaperone." Senior and Emmaus Team Leader Marisa Garvin shared, "Emmaus was an experience that allowed me to deepen my faith and strengthen my relationship with God, while also learning from the shared experiences of my peers and Emmaus sisters. It was one of the highlights of my high school career!"

### 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

YOUNG ALUM BRUNCH: The Classes of 2015 to 2018 were invited back to Preston in the beginning of January to share their college

experiences with the Class of 2019. The seniors were able to ask the young alumnae their questions about college life, specifically regarding life after Preston. It was a great chance for the seniors to get first-hand information about the college experience from current college students, as well as a chance for the alumnae to visit their favorite teachers, and connect with many of their friends. Gianna Fragale '17 shared her experience regarding dorming at Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island and how she felt PHS prepared her for college. She also gave helpful tips to any-

one interested in studying abroad during their time in college as she was preparing for her own study abroad experience in Germany in spring of 2019. Senior Lisandra Pena '19 stated, "It was so great to hear from girls who were in my position not too long ago and learn about how they felt making the transition from Preston to college."



Preston seniors celebrated a beloved milestone of their senior year at Mulino's at Lake Isle on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Music and dancing were provided by Entertainment and Sound Unlimited DJs. The soonto-be graduates danced the night away one last time as a class and celebrated a beautiful high school

tradition. Rebecca del Toro, who was crowned this year's Prom Queen stated, "Prom was an unforgettable night for me and my friends. It was bittersweet knowing this would be the final time we would celebrate a high school milestone as a class, but I am so grateful for the memories and experiences I've shared with the Class of 2019!"



The rising Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors celebrated the end of the school year on Friday, June 14th with the annual Step Up Day pep rally. The Class of 2020 kicked things off with an exciting performance choreographed by some of the many talented seniors. The rest of the student body then took part in the annual relay races and games and joined in the famous

"P-H-S YES!" cheer led by the everenthusiastic Ms. Marge McEvoy. Senior Leah Chin said "Step Up Day is one of my favorite days of the year at Preston! It's always exciting to celebrate the end of the year as a school and take pride in your class. It's especially exciting to celebrate entering senior year and getting ready for all of the exciting things ahead!"





BACCALAUREATE MASS/
CLASS NIGHT: The

Baccalaureate Mass and Class
Night are two exciting and
memorable traditions for
seniors at Preston. At
Class Night, the seniors
shared one last meal as a
class while watching a slide
show of all of their fondest
memories from the past four

years and received their yearbooks. The Baccalaureate Mass celebrates the final Mass as a class and then they are welcomed into the Preston Alumnae Association. Dr. King addressed the Class of 2019 at the Baccalaureate Mass and shared how much the graduating class meant to him, especially as it was his last year teaching at Preston.

He recounted the many hilarious and heart-felt memories he shared with the

seniors and wished them the best in all of their future endeavors.

#### Dear Preston Community,

My name is Nazeli Acosta and I am an alumna of Preston High School, Class of 2015. With this letter, I invite you to share in the joy and gratitude I overwhelmingly feel for an institution like Preston High School. I will share parts of my story with you, delineating my understanding of how God used my four years at Preston to shape me into the woman I am today and the woman I hope to be someday.

As an eighth grader, I boiled down my top school choices to either the High School of Art and Design or Preston High School. One was public and free, the other private and beyond my parent's income bracket several times over. I was accepted into a program that partnered with Preston to fund my education at Preston. I was given a mentor who encouraged not only my academic growth, but also my emotional and social growth throughout high school and beyond.

As an inner-city kid growing up below the poverty line despite having two working parents, among gang violence and drug trafficking, and among mostly Blacks, Latinos and Afro-Latinos—the new neighborhood and demographics of the people I was surrounded by at Preston were major changes



that I needed to adjust to. The commute alone from Fordham Heights to Throgs Neck required traveling on three buses for an hour and forty-five minutes every morning. It was during this commute that I was became most aware of these differences, which would often bring me to tears; but I also grew closer to classmates from similar backgrounds to mine through our daily bus-ride conversations. These classmates were in the same program I was, and they, along with the Admissions Office staff, helped with my social transition freshman year. Yet this settled in more fully the summer before sophomore year started, when my family and I faced eviction and subsequent homelessness. I reached out to a fellow classmate who comforted me in a time of uncertainty and crisis. In this moment I knew there was something truly special about the people at Preston despite our different backgrounds, and I began to see my classmates as sisters whether we came from an upper, middle or low-income class and regardless of where our forbearers came from.

With my social transition complete, I could now focus on everything Preston had to offer, which enabled me to thrive academically while also forming meaningful bonds with my peers and teachers within the classroom and outside of it. Sophomore year was the year I discovered my affinity for the study of matter, its composition and behavior, and energy, and a potential career in medicine. This sprung from my desire to understand creation, an awe-inspired reverence towards our wonderful Creator responsible for it all, and an early call to serve the sick and vulnerable. I joined both the Chemistry Club and general Science Club. I served as a tutor and a Big Sister with the Preston Center of Compassion. I was encouraged and supported by my Chemistry teacher Mrs. Wicks and Physics teacher Mr. Martinez to apply to a highly selective STEM enrichment program at MIT. Similarly, my SSP mentor encouraged me to apply to a health professions exposure program at Weill Cornell Medical College. I was accepted into both programs as a junior. This wouldn't have happened if I had not had the overwhelming encouragement and support I found in Preston. I was also inducted into both the National Honor Society and the National English Honor Society, and was elected Student Body President. As president my senior year, apart from my role as liaison between administration and students, my main goal was to refocus our efforts as a student body on initiatives founded in compassion for others, such as our fundraising drive for a homeless shelter and our "Springternational Festival" which raised money for the UN Girl-Up Foundation and Nepal earthquake victims. These experiences changed the course of my life by expanding my network, helping me to explore viable career pathways, and deepening my passion for science and medicine. More importantly, these experiences served as a reminder that my worth stemmed only from one unmovable, eternal and perfect God and not academic excellence or prestige according to the world's standard. It was God's love

During my senior year, I was awarded a full scholarship to Providence College and was extended an offer to conduct research at Weill Cornell-Burke Medical Research Institute. To balance my interests in the physical sciences and my desire to pursue a career in medicine (either neurosurgery, neurology or radiology), I majored in Physics at Providence and did research and designed sanitation systems for developing rural communities during the academic year, but reserved my summers for shadowing neurosurgeons and conducting medical research. I found a mentor in the late Dr. Stephen Mecca who was aware of my dual interests and encouraged me to pursue both, noting that my path would be an unconventional one. The foundation I received at Preston, combined with my early work in rural communities and my exposure to patients, led me to always question how the science or technology I work on in the future can be used to improve not just healthcare itself, but access to the same healthcare in places where it is not readily available. I decided to take a gap year starting with the second semester of my sophomore year at Providence to pursue spiritual renewal, conduct research, and travel to my home country, the Dominican Republic. I am still a B.S. candidate in Physics on the pre-medical track, but now at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. UMass Lowell has provided a plethora of resources and opportunities for me, while also allowing me to be close to my new home and my church in Massachusetts. This summer I will be working in a lab at Stanford University where I will learn about and use x-ray crystallography to determine the atomic and molecular structure of bacterial ribosomes and their constituents in order to understand their resistance mechanisms.

I think about what God has done and how He has done it and stand amazed in gratitude. I think about my upbringing and all of the hardship my family endured and the sacrifices they made, yet I also think often about Preston, which opened up the path I find myself on now. The words Dignity, Honor, Respect, and Compassion are still the first words that come to mind when I remember Preston High School. This is partly because we would repeat the phrase at the end of every Theology class and at every assembly held in our gymnasium, and it became ingrained in our memories. But most importantly, this is because these virtues were developed and evidenced not just in my life, but also in the lives of my classmates, teachers, administrators, and staff. I vividly recall the days when I didn't have enough lunch money and the lunch ladies would still feed me, or when a Preston sister and faculty member bought my ticket to prom so that I wouldn't miss out on the experience. It is unfortunate that not every eighth grade girl who comes from a financially needy home with aspirations to attend Preston will be afforded the opportunity that PHS granted me, which is why, now more than ever, with the rise in tuition and need to sustain current initiatives such as the Engineering Lab and the Academic Summer Enrichment Program, we need your help to continue supporting our students and blazing the path for those students with significant hardship.

Please consider a gift to the Fund for Preston that will allow Preston to continue to offer an excellent education to deserving young women.

Nazeli Acosta

# BASS SO SING SOS SAND PARSO 2 0 1 9 Softwaday, March 50" 6:00 to 10:000 p.m. Preston High School 2760 Schurz Avenue Bronx, NY 10466

# FUNDRAISING —— EVENTS ——

CARD PARTY: Preston's annual Card Party took place on Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at the school where attendees took a trip "back to the 80s" with fun raffles including disco balls and neon sunglasses 50/50s, mystery money balloon popping, as well as various categories with prizes ranging from home supplies and restaurant gift certificates, to a 65-inch flat screen TV, a laptop donated by Councilman Mark Gjonaj, and one of the most popular prizes of the night, two tickets to a Billy Joel concert at Madison Square Garden. Proceeds from this event went towards Preston's annual scholarship fund which provides scholarship and financial aid opportunities for incoming students. Save the date for next year's luau-themed Card Party on March 21, 2020!

at Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course in the Bronx. The Preston community honored alumna and current board member Geralyn Harty Giannini '74 for her many years of dedication to the school. Attendees and sponsors of the event helped provide much needed scholarship opportunities for incoming and current Preston students. Former Dean of Students, Joseph DeBona shared, "The Golf Outing is always a great chance to reconnect with members of the Preston community, and enjoy a day out on the golf course supporting a school so near and dear to my heart." Next year's 12<sup>th</sup> annual Golf Outing will take place on Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course. Look out for an invitation in the mail!

Alumnae Reunion this April, where we celebrated the classes ending in 4 and 9.

Over 150 alumnae and former faculty were in attendance this year. We are happy to say that alumnae joined us from 13 different states with Patricia Savacchio Esposito '69 traveling over 2,500 miles from Nevada, Diana Rodriguez Pressley '69 traveling over 2,700 miles from Washington, and Marguerite Heckmann Christensen '79 and Karen Montalbano '69 traveling almost 3,000 miles all the way from

California! Attendees enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by Posto 22 complete with wine and sangria

while reminiscing with their peers and touring the school and learning about the many updates made since their days of roaming the halls as students.

This year, we honored Sr. Carol Wagner '69, Denise Soares '69, Eileen Lillis Clay '54, Denise Noonan Mackin '69, and Lorraine Zeiss Devine '69 for their many years of dedication and support to Preston. We look forward to celebrating with even more members of the PHS community next April, where we will honor classes ending in 5 and 0. For more information on how to become a member of the Alumnae Association and Class Ambassador, contact Grace Fragale at gfragale@prestonhs.org or 718-863-9134 ext. 143.

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.

# COLLEGE CREDIT Courses

Preston High School is proud to share that we now offer 7 college-credit credits for our students. These classes, taught by Ms. Rosemary DeMaio, Ms. Kellyanne Farrell, and Dr. Nik Unger include Intermediate Italian I and II, Algebra and Calculus I, Political and Social History I and II, Public Policy in Modern America, and Women & Social Change. This program through the University of Albany gives our high school students the opportunity to graduate from college in a shorter time frame by earning college credit for approved courses while still in high school. It also allows students to explore an area of academic interest before deciding to major or minor. These courses transfer to colleges and universities throughout the United States and beyond. Some of the additional benefits to this program include allowing students to earn more credit before going to college, which in turn provides more time and resources to take part in other opportunities such as study abroad, double major, participate in extracurricular activities, and more. We are very grateful to Ms. DeMaio and Dr. Unger for organizing this amazing opportunity for our students. We continue to offer college credit through the College Board's Advanced Placement courses in U.S. History, English Language and English Literature and A.P. Biology

# COMPASSION CONNECTION Updates

SCHOOL-WIDE FOOD DRIVE — For 6 weeks, Preston students donated non-perishable foods. We sorted, weighed, and packaged the food that went to stock 4 different food pantries - RDC Center of Compassion in Dover Plains, and Mercy Center, OLA Pantry, and St. Raymond's Pantry, all in the Bronx. Likewise, collected food was used to make packages by a variety of other Preston clubs-for families of Preston Center of Compassion's Big Sister-Little Sister Program, for Lamp Ministries, and for Santa Maria Parish. Total food raised and donated: 11,077 lbs.

COOKIE GRAMS — Compassion Connection baked and sold Cookie Grams — raising \$330 for the NY Chapter of the Children's Heart Foundation (Preston Alumna Danielle Visvader Pradas `98 is President of the NY Chapter of the CHF)

SANDWICH MAKING — (alternating weeks Turkey Cheese and Peanut Butter and Jelly) Every Thursday in Lent, as well as 12/7, 1/10 Compassion Connection made an average of 120 sandwiches each time which were then donated to Lamp Ministries, who distributes the sandwiches to the marginalized and homeless on the streets of NYC. Total sandwiches made: 1000

DANCE MARATHON - \$1200 raised - donated to Lamp Ministries.

PEN PALS AT PROVIDENCE REST NURSING HOME — Preston alumna Michelle Luchetti (Class of '08) is now the director of therapeutic recreation and we've coordinated an ongoing pen-pal relationship with 20 of the residents.

# ATHLETICS Updates

- AJA DARBOE received "Player of the Year" award in varsity volleyball.
- KAITLIN DALRIAS received "All League" award in soccer.
- REBECCA DELTORO received "All League" award in softball.
- Congratulations to both the varsity and junior varsity softball teams for a fantastic season and making it into the playoffs.

#### **CALLING ALL ATHLETES: PHS SCOREBOARD!**

After many years, our scoreboard needs to retire. We are halfway to our goal of securing a new scoreboard with shot clocks. A major thank you to Lori, Brianna'12 and Alyssa Finelli '16 for donating an 85 inch TV so that we can now have instant replays! It will also be a great way for local businesses to advertise. We could use your help. Please consider a donation to PHS Athletics. A list of donors will be displayed on the TV for all volleyball and basketball games.

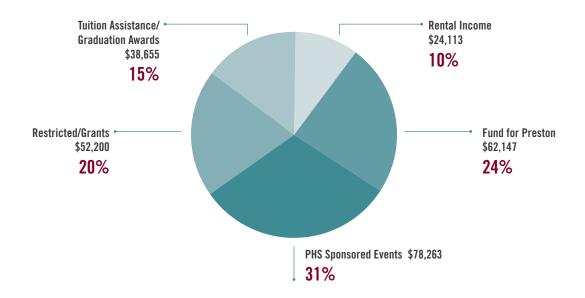
To donate visit www.prestonhs.org/donate. Goooooo Preston Panthers!

We are seeking an experienced JV softball coach.
If interested, please email sportsphs@prestonhs.org

# RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

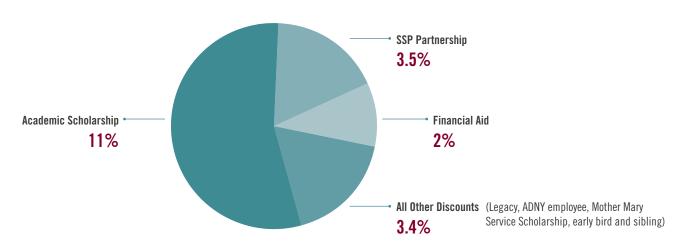
# -REPORT-

#### **DEVELOPMENT REVENUE**



#### PRESTON FUNDED TUITION ASSISTANCE

(20% of gross tuition)



Over 60% of our students receive some form of tuition assistance from Preston, outside programs and foundations, or in combination. The shortfall to educate a Preston student for the 2019-2020 academic year is \$963. Total Tuition assistance \$ represent over 27% of gross tuition.

#### 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
Jean M. Kwartler '98, President
Janice Mastropietro '80
Patrick Muldoon
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

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2780 Schurz Avenue. Bronx, New York 10465

TELL US YOUR NEWS gfragale@prestonhs.org

# **WOMEN'S SUMM** 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Sun., 10/6/20

Preston High School will host the Women's Summit. A motivational and spiritual day for women of all ages by women of all ages. Keynotes, Breakouts, Conversation, Light lunch and Relaxation.

Register on-line: www.prestonhs.org \$10 registration fee, babysitters available, reservations required, 718-863-9134 ext. 143.

- Presenters Include:
- Patricia Harris Palumbo '79 Dr. Erin Ponton Fiero
- Patty Sanchez Franco '91 Stacy Luccioni Munch '84 • Sr. Carol Wagner, RDC '69 • Niomi Rupram '06 • Wyneisha Kinsey '10

# Save the Date

**SATURDAY** 10/19/19: **HAUNTED MANSION** 

THURSDAY- SUNDAY 2/13-16/20 **PRESTON PLAYERS PRESENT:** ONCE ON THIS **ISLAND** 



**SATURDAY** 3/28/20: ALUMNAE **REUNION** 5 & 0

**TUESDAY** 5/5/20: GOLF **OUTING**