

THE blarney stone

A PUBLICATION FOR THE COMMUNITY OF NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND MARIST ACADEMY



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the arts issue

As public financing of art education wanes, the visual and performing arts at Notre Dame continue to thrive

Against a backdrop in the U.S. of reduced arts funding in schools, especially in K-12 education, the performing and visual arts programs at Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy are thriving.

NDPMA artists (and their teachers) are now rested and re-energized as they head into the second semester after an exhausting but exhilarating holiday season of events, exhibits, plays and concerts.

According to Director of Bands Joe Martin, who's been teaching for 17 years, this time of year also provides an opportunity for the students not only to reflect on what they've done thus far, but to better focus on a direction for the rest of this year, the rest of their high school career, and more importantly for some, to begin to develop a potential career path into college and beyond.

"Even after many years of teaching, I am constantly amazed at how talented the students at Notre Dame are," Martin says. "Even though Dave (Fazzini, director of choir), Kati (Swieca-Brockman, visual arts chair), myself and our other excellent arts faculty spend a lot of time schooling the kids on both theory and practice, I am flab-

The paintings shown at right are by Hayden Smith, grade 12, as part of his IB Art class. His assignment was to complete two portraits of the same person—one realistic and one abstract. (Note: view image of lower painting from a distance.)



bergasted at how much raw talent we have to work with."

It's Martin's assessment that of all the private schools in the area, NDPMA is definitely the best in performing arts for band, choir and drama. "I think it speaks to the high importance the school places on retaining and graduating well-rounded individuals with a great foundation in the arts," he said.

That is not necessarily the case elsewhere in the country as many states are struggling with arts funding in schools.

Amid intense pressure from the state legislature, on September 30, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger came up with a last-minute veto of a state assembly-sponsored bill that would have severely diminished access to courses in the arts for high school students. Arts education advocates in the state say they have achieved a legendary "David and Goliath" victory in the defeat of this bill.

But other states have not been so lucky. Funding for the arts and arts education in Florida, for example, has been cut way back, as have many other programs due to the sluggish economy. From appropriating \$35 million in state funding just five years ago, today arts programs across the state of Florida now are given less than \$500,000.



Arts a big part of original plan

When the Marist Fathers and Brothers

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Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy provides its economically diverse student body a Catholic-Christian and internationally recognized college-preparatory experience of lasting value.

The perfect mix of art and science at Purdue

Current Purdue University student and 2008 Notre Dame Preparatory School graduate Joe Kubinski is mixing art and science with high aplomb

Joe Kubinski '08 (NDP) is majoring in aeronautical/astronautical engineering at Purdue University and also plays trombone in the school's marching band. He says the two disciplines complement each other and keep him very busy.

When do you plan on graduating and why did you choose Purdue?

I plan to graduate in May of 2012 and chose Purdue University due to its strong engineering program, Big Ten reputation,



and world-class resources. I wanted to attend a school where I could create my own experience and have the opportunity to stand out among a campus of scientists and engineers. I am very proud to be a Boilermaker.

Do you have any post-graduate plans?

Yes, I plan to go straight into industry working for a premier aerospace company as a design or propulsion engineer. My goal is to work on projects at the prime

contract level, where conceptual design and final assembly are done by the same company.

Why did you choose this field?

I have developed a passion for the industry despite the fact that none of my family is or was involved with aerospace. My interest began in grade school, when I realized I could draw airplanes far better than anyone else. Visiting museums, watching air shows, and flying toy planes further confirmed my interest in aviation. Engineering came later—toward the middle of my time at NDP. And I saw what my sister was doing at Purdue in chemical engineering and realized I could be doing the same thing in aerospace.

How did you get involved with the Purdue marching band?

Interest in marching band for me began in middle school when I watched my sister Claire '05 (NDP) perform with the high school band at halftime of football games. I was hooked from the start and participated in marching band all four years at Notre Dame. For me the next logical step was to march at the collegiate level, and Purdue happened to provide a world-class college band experience.

What is it really like "behind the scenes" in a marching band?

Simply put: a model of efficiency. Our job is to put on a new, entertaining halftime show for every home game each football season. This presents the unique challenge of learning new drill charts and music in only five days, requiring a full effort from all 373 members. Marching band has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my college career. It is a great release from class work during the week and keeps me busy and focused on weekends. The entire Purdue marching band was actually in New York City over Thanksgiving break to perform in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade for nearly 50 million Americans. It was an experience I will never forget.

Do you have any special story or community involvement experience at your college?

Most of the work I have done



has been internal to the organizations I am a part of, but there is an event called Jazz Festival in which I participate every year at Purdue. It is a sort of Purdue band "invitation" where middle- and high-school jazz bands have an opportunity to perform for judges (us) and take part in a clinic run by experienced jazz musicians.

Do you feel that Notre Dame Prep prepared you for life after high school?

Yes, I do. The broad exposure Notre Dame Prep gave me to all subjects has been invaluable in my college career. Upon leaving NDP I had a strong sense of direction toward my chosen major at Purdue, and now feel I am in the right place. NDP also conditioned me well for my freshman semesters, having similar course difficulty and homework volume.

Was there a certain teacher who inspired you in a special way?

This was difficult to put a finger on, but I feel there were three teachers at NDP who really pushed me to do my best. Mr. Martin, our band director, provided the inspiration to pursue marching band at the collegiate level. Mrs. Derico, my A.P. Composition teacher, was instrumental to my maturity as an effective communicator. And Mr. McCaskey, who managed to merge comedy with calculus, a feat yet to be achieved by any of my professors at Purdue.

What are your hopes, dreams and aspirations?

Actually two hopes: an exciting internship this summer; the Purdue men's basketball team to make it to the Final Four. Dreams: attaining a private pilot's certificate with an IFR. Aspirations: to be a leader in my chosen field and make a positive impact on my team members and community. 🇺🇸

Arts, from page 1

founded NDPMA in 1994, they not only wanted the area's best Catholic school academically, they believed against conventional wisdom at the time that a parochial school could also have an arts program on par with some of the finest elite private schools in southeast Michigan.

"We frequently hear people talking about NDPMA as the best Catholic school in the state when it comes to academics," says current head of school Fr. Leon Olszamowski, s.m. "I think we've proven that year in and year out. But what is also gratifying for me to hear is how artistically talented our students are and that we have such a large number of course offerings and opportunities in the arts. And we expect our visual and performing arts students to approach their creative classes and activities with the same focus as their more traditional academic disciplines like math and science."

That focus has brought forth numerous awards, honors and prestigious invitations for NDPMA artists and musicians. Band students have consistently received first and second divisions at district festivals and three students made Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association's "All States."

"I believe we are the only private school in Michigan that has had students make All States," Martin said. "And over the years our band has been asked to participate in the Pontiac Holiday Extravaganza, the Rochester Christmas Parade, the Mackinaw Memorial Day Parades, the Magic Kingdom in Florida, and even a New Years Day Parade in London, England."

The NDPMA choirs regularly receive excellent ratings at MSVMA (Michigan School Vocal Music Association) district and state festivals. Last year all four choirs that participated received excellent ratings. NDPMA vocalists also fare very well at solo and ensemble festivals each year.

NDP senior vocalist Kate Huttenlocher, one of only eight high school students accepted into Detroit's Rackham Symphony Choir this year, will be traveling to Chicago over Martin Luther King, Jr., weekend in January for a two-night performance of "Too Hot To Handel" at the Auditorium Theater.



NDP 2009 alum Andreana Rosnik recently won the Congressional Art Competition for a painting that was showcased in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., for a year. And NDP freshman Gwen Keller was awarded a Silver Key in the 2010 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for Southeastern Michigan.

Well-thought-out curriculum

The NDPMA Visual Arts program offers a number of classes in both studio art technique and appreciation. Students explore a variety of media and materials to continually improve their individual artistic and creative abilities. Coursework includes intense instruction in various media as well as gallery and museum visits, and students have numerous opportunities to participate in artistic contests. Each spring, students review a year's worth of artwork for exhibition at the school's annual public art show. Students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate art program also participate in an art show in the spring.



And, throughout the year, faculty members assist many students in portfolio development as they explore options at the university level and beyond.

The school's Performing Arts curriculum offers extraordinary opportunities for all students to express themselves both musically and dramatically. In-class instruction allows students to develop individual talents and tastes with a variety of instru-

ments and vocal techniques. Students are exposed to theory, history, and various musical styles, while paying particular attention to lessons of music appreciation. In addition, each year there are numerous opportunities for students at all three divisions to get involved in various drama, choral and stage productions.

Dave Fazzini, chorale director at NDPMA since 1999, gives his students a very wide and eclectic exposure to singing and song styling, but with an emphasis on the academic. "Singing in a chorus is highly academic," he says. "Students learn and develop the language of



'solfege,' a very complex system that involves the brain on multiple levels. Choir singers also strive for excellence by working every small detail of a piece of music. This attention to detail is academic by nature. Singers are in a constant state of reflection, performing and reviewing their progress so that they can better themselves in the future, and it is an important part of the academic process to which young people need to be exposed."

Fazzini notes that the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), originally passed in 1965 and

reauthorized as part of the more recent No Child Left Behind Act, defines the study of arts as a core subject. He says that these initiatives all reinforce the fact that "the arts play a significant role in the development and learning process of children."

A recent study by the U.S. Department of Education bears that out, stating that children with musical experience perform higher on standardized tests than students with no musical experience. Another study by Columbia University found that students in the arts are more cooperative with teachers and peers, more self-confident, and

ARTS BENEFIT MATH, SCIENCES AND LANGUAGE

In a 2003 study conducted in British Columbia, Canada, eleventh-grade students engaged in school band and choir averaged 9.4%, 14.2% and 2.9% better in math, biology and English, respectively, when compared with all eleventh graders in the test group. 🇺🇸

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FORMER NFL STAR TALKS TO STUDENTS ABOUT MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

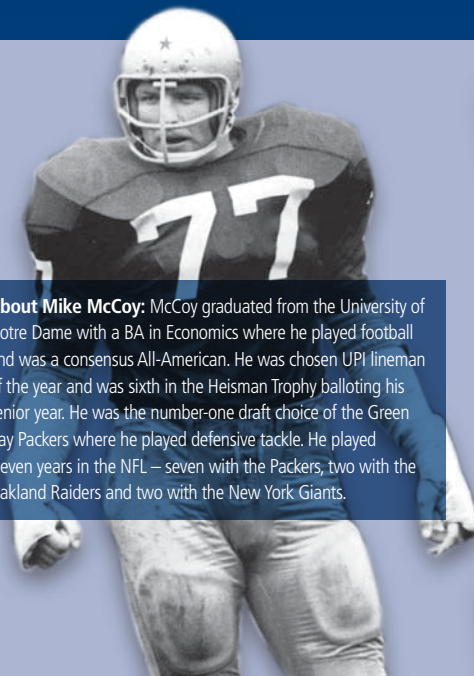


Former NFL star Mike McCoy recently visited with students on the Notre Dame Pontiac campus to deliver a faith-based message of hope and encouragement to help young people become morally focused, overcome challenges and deal effectively with peer pressure. His message was heavy on developing the self-confidence necessary to achieve true success.

McCoy, who played for the Green Bay Packers, Oakland Raiders and New York Giants, told the students that God has given each of them unique talents and abilities. He also said God has a plan and purpose for their individual lives. "God values

the sanctity of life," he said. "He also has given us the precious gift of free will. But this freedom sometimes gets us into trouble. The three Ds—Decisions Determine our Destiny—the choices we make, who we allow to influence us and what we put into our minds will determine who and what we become."

He talked to the kids about the land mines they might encounter in life. "The SAD word: Sex, Alcohol and Drugs. We know millions of people are addicted or on the edge of addiction," he said. "However there are over a million students who have either made a U-turn by not believing the cultural lies or they are reinforcing a decision they've already made." 🇺🇸



About Mike McCoy: McCoy graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a BA in Economics where he played football and was a consensus All-American. He was chosen UPI lineman of the year and was sixth in the Heisman Trophy balloting his senior year. He was the number-one draft choice of the Green Bay Packers where he played defensive tackle. He played eleven years in the NFL – seven with the Packers, two with the Oakland Raiders and two with the New York Giants.

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better able to express their ideas.

Between the upper and middle divisions at Notre Dame, there are nearly 30 separate classroom or studio courses in the visual and performing arts available to students. And many courses in the high school are offered in sections that span both semesters during the entire four years. In addition, lower division students in junior kindergarten and beyond are exposed from the beginning to the fundamentals of visual art, including painting, color theory, printmaking as well as a fairly intense study of art history.

Exposure to art in elementary education

Further demonstrating the importance NDPMA places on early exposure to the arts, both the lower and middle division programs put an unusually high value on the individual, imaginative and artistic potential of each student to help encourage the development of self confidence, self discovery and self expression.

Chris Smith, now in his fifth year as music instructor in the lower division, has helped develop a curriculum with the basic premise that experiencing music precedes intellectual understanding, that students actively engage in a variety of musical experiences, including speech, movement and singing, and that students begin to learn both rhythm and pitched instruments.

"The elementary music program is constantly changing and growing from year to year," Smith said. "Each year I've significantly altered something related to the program, whether it be one of our two annual concerts, adding a lengthy composing project, changing up the band and recorder

repertoire, or making connections with classroom IB units. This helps to keep the class current with the times and helps to keep the interest high with the students and myself."

Ramona McCruden and Matthew McGuire are visual-arts instructors in the lower and middle divisions, respectively. According to McGuire, they both believe that ND Marist Academy's visual-arts program should stress the individual, imaginative, and artistic potential of each child. "We constantly encourage and promote the development of self-discovery and self-expression in our kids. Art also helps build self-confidence and students learn to become visually literate," McGuire said.

NDPMA ARTS FACULTY

Janice Corteville NDMA-MD Drama

Ned Devine NDP Visual Arts

David Fazzini Director of Choir

Joseph Martin Director of Bands

Ramona McCruden NDMA-LD Visual Arts

Matt McGuire NDMA-MD Visual Arts

Chris Smith NDMA-LD Music

Kati Swieca-Brockman Visual Arts Chair

Boost for college acceptance

According to Dr. Gloria A. Anderson, a nationally recognized arts advocate and member of the American Psychological Association (APA), life is less joyful without a way to appreciate or create art, whether with instruments or with the voice or with the gift of acting.

"Without a creative outlet, self-express-

sion can bottled up inside, unable to be shared on a canvas or proudly displayed in a creation made from a clump of clay," Anderson said. "If students intend to enter colleges and universities, they will need these skills and experiences to qualify for entrance. Without them, college recruiters will only have academic scores to examine. If background in the arts is lacking, it reduces the chance of being accepted at good schools."

Craig Cortello, author of "Everything We Needed to Know About Business, We Learned Playing Music," and an expert in arts education, believes that another advantage of arts in academia lies in the ability of an institution to expose all students to the creative process "and to provide a vehicle for developing creative, diverse, and broad-minded individuals more ready for a changing world and changing workplace in any field."

Notre Dame Prep alum (2008) Joe Kubinski exemplifies that concept. He currently is studying aeronautical/astro-nautical engineering and is in the marching band at Purdue University and doesn't see any disconnect between those two interests.

"The broad exposure Notre Dame Prep gave me in all subjects (especially music) has been invaluable in my college career. Upon leaving NDP, I had a strong sense of direction toward my chosen major at Purdue, and now feel I am in the right place." 🇺🇸

Please see the NDPMA website under the News tab: "The Blarney Stone" (www.ndpma.org/drupal/newsletter) for in-depth interviews with members of the school's arts faculty.



Sights (and sounds) from NDPMA performing artists



DETROIT RED WINGS' CLEARY VISITS LOWER DIVISION

Detroit Red Wings forward Dan Cleary visited Notre Dame Marist Academy – Lower Division on October 29 in the first of twenty installments of the team's school youth hockey program sponsored by the Detroit Red Wings Foundation.



Detroit Red Wings forward Dan Cleary (center) with NDP hockey coach Bob Rosbury (left) and Red Wings radio announcer Ken Kal.

Cleary was joined by Red Wings radio play-by-play announcer Ken Kal and introduced 120 NDMA students to the sport of hockey through a new youth street and floor hockey program. The Wings

provide equipment and hands-on instruction to 20 local elementary schools throughout Metro Detroit. The lower division received two full sets of floor hockey equipment complete with hockey sticks and goalie nets to encourage students to stay active and healthy through the sport of hockey.

NDMA-LD principal Diana Atkins said she was thrilled that Cleary was able to visit the school. "The new equipment will help out a lot, and hopefully we'll have even more hockey enthusiasts among our students in the coming years." 🇺🇸

Kairos retreat a success

On a cold December evening, thirty-eight NDP students were warmly welcomed back to the NDPMA community by parents and friends. They had just returned from Kairos X, a four-day retreat at the Columbaire Retreat Center in Clarkston that focused on the students' relationships with others, with themselves, and with God. Since 2005, Ms. Kati Swieca-Brockman, chair of the school's visual arts department, has been organizing Kairos retreats for juniors and seniors. Kairos, which means "God's time" in Greek, offers retreat participants four days away from the outside world but inside a world of stimulating conversation, prayer and introspection.

"I learned so much about myself through the Kairos retreat," said NDP senior Samantha Meltzer. "It taught me how to accept myself for who I am."

Eight students who have already been on the retreat served as the student-leaders. These leaders guide the retreatants through small group discussions and serve as peer-guides throughout the experience.

"I can honestly say that being a student-leader on the retreat was the most powerful experience of my life," said 12th grader Alex Rink.

Seniors Matt DePorre and Tori Obermanns, who worked diligently with Swieca-Brockman for months preparing for this powerful experience, served as student-retreat coordinators. Student leaders and coordinators were paired with adult leaders for additional guidance throughout the experience. Each leader—student and adult—gave a talk that touched on personal experiences, encouraging thoughts and connections to Christianity.

The Kairos retreat will be offered again in the spring for seniors and juniors. 🇺🇸



NDPMA is also on Facebook! Find link on the NDPMA web site: ndpma.org.



NDPMA is on Twitter! (twitter.com/NDPMA) Get the latest news and updates on your cell phone by texting "follow NDPMA" to 40404.



A higher grade of learning

The Blarney Stone is published five times per year by the Advancement Office of NDPMA. Contact The Blarney Stone at 248-373-2171 or mckelly@ndpma.org.
School web site: ndpma.org

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy is an International Baccalaureate World School.



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