

THE blarney stone

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



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Spirituality

Spiritual development a focus for Notre Dame students in 2016-2017



Notre Dame students and campus minister Della Lawrence, far right, were in Chicago this summer as part of the national Catholic service mission experience called "Young Neighbors in Action" (YNIA), which was sponsored through the Center for Ministry Development.

Campus ministry at Notre Dame is once again planning a busy year on campus. According to Della Lawrence, one of five working in the school's campus ministry function, the department will be expanding some of its more successful programs in the upcoming 2016-17 school year.

Those initiatives include the "Launch," which was started recently to help get incoming students in the high school better acclimated to the school goings-on, but more importantly, to get them more familiar with the school's mission of "working with God to form Christian people, upright citizens and academic scholars."

Lawrence said the Launch was redesigned a bit this year to work better with

the school's Peer Leader program.

"We held Launch this past June after school ended," Lawrence said. "It was condensed to a 2-1/2 hour program that involved both incoming freshman for this coming year and their parents. During the Launch, Fr. Joe (Hindelang, s.m., NDP principal) welcomed the families in prayer, and Fr. (Jim) Strasz, s.m., (religion dept.) introduced them to our school's Marist mission."

Lawrence said the students then met their Peer Leader mentors for the first time after which the Peer Leaders and incoming freshmen broke off into the gym as the parents stayed in the cafeteria for a separate program.

STUDENT SPIRITUALITY

"The overall purpose of campus ministry at Notre Dame is to support and complement both school and family in their mutually integrative roles of faith formation and religious education," said Cathy Zuccaro, who heads the campus ministry group. "This extends to the lived-faith experience of the students. The student's spiritual development is the core focus of a Christian, Catholic education and this faith, these values and the supporting theology are taught, encouraged and discovered at NDP. How students live out these principles becomes their spirituality."

She said campus ministry serves to support, enrich and foster that growth in Notre Dame's students.

Zuccaro and Lawrence have some new help this year as Fr. Ron Nikodem, s.m., has already arrived on campus as campus minister, and Eric Olson has joined the department, which also includes Mary Watson.

"We have been rearranging responsibilities so all current comprehensive ministry and outreach can be attained," Lawrence said. "In the past we have been stretching ourselves very thin, so having more staff will allow us to be more effective at what we are already doing."

Meanwhile, at the June "Launch," which Lawrence said was one of the school's most successful, the incoming freshmen were introduced to the other students in their Peer Leader "families" and

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



NOTRE DAME TEACHER GIVES UP CORPORATE WORLD FOR A CAREER IN THE CLASSROOM: PG.6

George Lucas, Ron Howard and Danny Santos ('11)

Notre Dame and famed film school part of alum's creative training ground



When Danny Santos graduated from Notre Dame Prep, he pretty much knew which direction he wanted to take his college education and ultimately his career.

After leaving NDP in 2011, he enrolled in cinema studies at Oakland University, and then, in January 2015, transferred to the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, the most competitive film school in the United States, where the likes of George Lucas, Ron Howard, John Carpenter and Judd Apatow among many other movie royalty also have studied.

He said NDP prepared him well for the rigor of such a prestigious film school by providing its own eclectic mix of arts, academics and leadership opportunities.

"At Notre Dame, I could do the arts and participate in activities such as Kairos, which I led on my senior year," said Santos, "and sports such as wrestling. I think because of my drive, I was able to become captain of the wrestling team my senior year. I truly believe without the resources that NDP offered me, the variety, the amazing and encouraging staff and faculty, and the warm support and friendship of my peers, I would not be where I am today, and I'm so thankful to NDP for those experiences."

Where Santos is today, geographically, is in southern California. Where he is creatively is a bit more complicated. That's because he's managed to combine an inherent talent in music

with his love of film — which incidentally was manifested at Notre Dame — into a budding career as a recording musician and producer of videos. In fact, this summer, he will be doing an internship at a music and film production company called Greenlight Media and Marketing, where he will assist on film shoots and other creative projects. Greenlight's clients include the Dave Matthews Band, Alabama Shakes and Lady Antebellum as well as corporate clients like Under Armour and Hyundai along with complete music festivals like Bonaroo.

Notre Dame alum Danny Santos ('11) began to consider a career in filmmaking and music while a student at ND Prep.

"I definitely believe that from NDP, I found my identity as a leader and a creative, as I was heavily involved with the NDP Irish Film Festival, where I began my filmmaking ventures," Santos said. "I also believe that because of that experience, I have the capacity to connect with others and help build myself up while also bringing the community around me up." He said what he loves about film and music is that the work is collaborative and that it takes teamwork to make the best projects come together. "And thanks to NDP, I have truly found my passions and strengths as someone who can work creatively and as a team leader," he said.

'SPIRITED' STUDENT

During his senior year at NDP band camp, Santos was given the

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they also engaged in activities to help them meet other incoming freshmen.

“Students explored more about their personality and understanding and others better,” Lawrence said. “They also went on a scavenger hunt to become more acquainted with the campus. In addition, the Peer Leaders spoke about how high

is a very gratifying experience, she said the most rewarding for her is when she gets to take students on retreat.

“Just to get the kids away from the hectic schedules and daily stress of school and regular life is important,” she said. “I especially enjoy the Peer Minister retreats. It’s great to see students relax, smile, enjoy time and get to know each



Notre Dame students regularly attend ministry events with other students from various parts of the U.S.

school is a very different experience from middle school even for those who attended Notre Dame’s middle division, and they also gave them advice for success on both the social and academic fronts.”

other better. They openly share their faith without hesitation and all are amazed by the insight they have for one another. They become more aware of God’s presence among themselves and throughout their daily lives.”

GOD’S PRESENCE AMONG STUDENTS

On a personal level, Lawrence added that while the entire campus ministry operation

New iPads for lower division and computers for lab highlight IT changes this year

When students streamed into the halls of Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy at the beginning of the school year, they likely noticed a number of changes within the school’s information technology footprint.

According to Eden Konja, NDPMA’s director of information and academic technology, plenty of work was accomplished over the summer break.

“IT had a busy few months and we’ve got some exciting information to share as well as new software implementations that the students and faculty are sure to utilize this school year,” Konja said.

The IT group purchased all new computers for the school’s main computer lab which now also has a second 3D printer online and ready to go.

“We also purchased more CATIA (CAD) licenses as the course continues to grow,” Konja added.

He also said the lower division will be receiving all new iPads with “amazing protective cases” for the school’s youngest students. IT also purchased an Apple server that will update any connected Apple device to help reduce network traffic and improve bandwidth in the lower division.

“Impero Education Pro, a LanSchool replacement that is much more powerful with many new features, has been implemented in the school,” Konja said. “It has the capability to provide to teachers a live stream of each student’s screens and allows for easier broad-



Notre Dame signs agreement with new dining service provider

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy has signed an agreement with Flik Independent School Dining, a division of Flik Hospitality Group based in Rye Brook, New York, to be the school’s dining and food service provider beginning with this school year.

According to school officials, the change in foodservice providers was made to provide a more nutritious menu of breakfast and lunch options in a program specifically customized for all Notre Dame students’ needs.

“We looked at a number of different options and companies when we decided to change providers,” said Anthony Block, Notre Dame’s chief financial officer. “Flik came in with what we thought was the best plan to provide wholesome, nutritious meals, prepared fresh from fresh ingredients while supporting local and sustainable agricultural practices.”

Ray Mulligan, who is president of Flik Independent School Dining, said he is proud that Flik will be the new dining service provider at Notre Dame.

“We are the market leader in independent school dining, currently serving over 190 prestigious private and independent schools,” he said. “Our successful partnership with independent

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SANTOS, from page 2

“Most Spirited” award and at graduation he was awarded the “Spirit of the Fighting Irish” for exemplifying the standards expected from NDP students. He also received a plaque for his leadership on the NDP wrestling team.

“Aside from my Notre Dame experience,” Santos said, “I also think that my personal need to express myself and create something to share with the world is a direct result of the infinite unconditional love and support of my parents, who have truly helped me make



Santos plays club dates in and around Los Angeles, where he now lives and attends school at USC. Check out ndpma.org to see video of a performance Santos gave this summer at Notre Dame.

all my dreams come true so far. My father worked very hard to be able to send me to schools such as Notre Dame Prep and USC and I would not be where I am today without both my parents.”

Now looking forward to graduation from USC soon with his degree in cinema and media studies, Santos is wasting no time in getting into a career in producing and directing films, film scores, and creating original singer/songwriter material. Early this year, Santos began an IndieGoGo campaign to help fund an album of original songs and compositions.

“The IndieGoGo campaign goal was to raise \$10,000 in an attempt to fund the recording and producing of an album of my original singer/songwriter and film-scoring material,” he said. “My goal is to release this album by December 2016, fully recorded, produced and packaged. As a singer/songwriter in Los Angeles, I’ve performed at locations on Hollywood Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and downtown LA, and as a film scorer I’m writing music for my own film works as well as for fellow USC cinematic arts students.”

Santos’ campaign went from February 1 to March 31, and while he fell short of his \$10,000 goal, he was able to raise \$7,300 from family, friends, and others. With the money raised, he said he will be going forward with recording his album, which will be titled “The Prophet,” and consist of 12 original songs within a concept

following the journey of a young prophet as he meets many different characters and scenarios along his journey to following a call to spirituality, according to Santos.

NEW ALBUM IN THE WORKS INCLUDES MUSICAL HELP FROM ANOTHER ALUM

“I will be recording from July 11-17 at Bedrock LA, a recording studio that has featured clients such as Beck, Cat Power, Edward Sharp, Fitz and the Tantrums, Group Love, MGMT, Reggie Watts, The Shins, Skrillex, and Thom Yorke of Radiohead, among many other great musicians,” he said. “The studio has had a wide range of clientele and I’m really looking forward to recording there.”

Santos said the album will feature many different styles and instrumentations, ranging from simple folk with acoustic guitar and percussion to lush arrangements with vocal soprano, cello, french horn, oboe, harp, violin, and flute to rock arrangements with electric guitar and drum kits.

“Jessica Thomas, also an NDP alum who studied flute at Michigan State, will be providing the flute for the album,” Santos said. “Also, I’ll be doing arrangements in collaboration with Liza Wallace, a harp player in California who studied with the same harp teacher as singer-songwriter and actress Joanna Newsom.”

If all goes as planned, Santos said the record will be released on January 7, 2016, in Michigan. He said they are planning a record-release party in the Metro Detroit area on January 7.

“The ultimate goal of the project is to create 12 original music videos in collaboration with other filmmakers, either at USC’s Cinematic Arts School or friends of mine in Los Angeles and Detroit,” Santos said. “After the videos are made, I hope to submit them to film festivals as a way of promoting the record.”

Promoting his former high school and inspiring future “dreamers” at his alma mater also are never far from Santos’ thinking either.

“I hope one day I can be an example for future NDPMA students the same way that other people inspired me,” Santos said. “I would love to come back to the school and give a speech to students about following their dreams. I’d love to share my music with the students, and one day I’d love to be able to give back to the school through donations when I make my own dreams of becoming a famous director, film scorer, and singer/songwriter come true!” 🎸🎤



Santos stopped by the Notre Dame Alumni Association office last month and performed four songs for a small group gathered in the main room of the Fr. Colin House. A video recording of the set is available at ndpma.org.

Notre Dame's IB Diploma success rate again well ahead of U.S. and world

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy announced in early July that 97% of its students enrolled in the school's International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (DP) had successfully received an IB Diploma. This number is ahead of last year's IB-Diploma Program graduation result of 92% and well ahead of U.S. and worldwide average pass rates.



Kim Anderson, who is an IB Diploma program coordinator at NDPMA and Spanish teacher, said that the latest results were outstanding.

"Our kids did an amazing job and I could not be more proud of them," she said. Also, a big thanks to all of our NDP teachers who taught them over the past four years. We are so blessed to have such a fantastic teaching staff."

Anderson also noted that in the past six years, Notre Dame has not had any student in its IB Diploma program fail the Theory of Knowledge course or the extended essay, two very critical components of the program.

According to the International Baccalaureate, in 2016, the worldwide average IB Diploma pass rate was 79.2% and the U.S. average was 67.7%.

Nearly 150,000 IB Diploma students from around the world also received their results from the May 2016 examination session in July.

They joined a community of more than 1,493,820 IB graduates in 136 countries across the world. The number of students receiving their diplomas this year marked a 5.38% increase compared to last year's exam session.

Notre Dame students attend special orthopaedic surgery and engineering sessions



From left in the photo are Notre Dame students Madison McClune, Micaela Gleason, Rachel Alef, Megan Thornton and Madelyn McCullen. Not pictured: Madalyn Winarski.

Six Notre Dame students joined 30 other high school students in the Detroit area who were chosen out of hundreds of applicants for the Perry Initiative Medical Program, which was held this summer at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. The program

focuses on teaching young women about the field of orthopaedic surgery and medical engineering. Seniors Madison McClune, Micaela Gleason, Rachel Alef and Madalyn Winarski along with juniors Megan Thornton and Madelyn McCullen worked and studied with orthopaedic surgeons and university medical students on the day-long session at Beaumont.

The students learned about possible career paths in orthopaedic surgery from hospital surgeons and medical device engineering with personnel from Kalamazoo-based medical device manufacturer Stryker Corp. Among many things discussed during the intense session was the need for proper balance in work and life.

They also worked with medical students and received actual hands-on experience with the various power tools needed during surgery and reconstruction, performed simulated repairs of femoral fractures, plate-setting, ACL reconstruction, spinal-fusion surgery preparation, suturing and casting.

Beatification process of Marist founder moves forward

Last month saw a significant step forward in the formal process of the Venerable Jean-Claude Colin, s.m.'s beatification, according to a recent update by the Society of Mary (Marists).

Almost two years ago, in October of 2014, a petition from Cardinal Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyons, to reopen the "cause" at the diocesan level was submitted to the Congregation of the Cause of Saints. This and three other Roman dicasteries were required to give their approval.

NOTE: The Marists currently sponsor Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy.

"The postulator in Fr. Colin's cause for sainthood, Fr. Carlo Maria Schianchi, monitored the matter at regular intervals with the Vatican," said the Society. "Finally, in a document dated July 8, 2016, Cardinal Amato, the prefect of the Congregation of Saints, has sent the *nihil obstat* to Cardinal Barbarin, permitting the cause to move forward at the diocesan level."

The Marists also said that an accompanying letter to the cause also mentioned that the writings of Fr. Colin would be studied by two theological censors, and that a historical commission should study well the difficulties that Fr. Colin had with the Vicars Apostolic and Propaganda Fide, along with a number of questions concerning the writing of the constitutions, and any other difficulties that may arise.

"This is an opportunity for us to renew our efforts to spread devotion to Fr. Colin and to pray for a miracle," said the Society in a note to Marists around the world.



The right decision

Dedicated teacher and Harry Potter fan makes a big career change and now can't imagine doing anything else

Sue McGinnis spent more than 15 years working in the automotive industry, suffering through all of its many ups and downs. After the Great Recession hit both the industry and the state of Michigan really hard, she finally decided that enough was enough.

Years before, while in grad school, this Wayne State University grad thought she might end up teaching somewhere. So with her auto job at a crossroad, she figured it was well-nigh time to head down that teaching road once again. So McGinnis went back to school, earned a Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) in secondary education from Oakland University, and began a new life in the classroom.

"It was a big decision to leave a career and make such a complete change mid-life," said McGinnis. "But my family was super-supportive and I knew it was the right decision because, it seemed, everything just fell into place."

And where McGinnis fell was into Notre Dame Preparatory School — and she is very glad she did. "This is my first teaching job and I cannot see myself teaching anywhere else."

A science, social studies and computer faculty member at Notre Dame, McGinnis also moderates the school's robotics team, "The Killer Bees." Doing that job also seemed to be a good fit for her as well.

"When I interviewed for a job here, Fr. Joe indicated that there was an opening for a robotics mentor," she recalled. "Since I came from the automotive industry, it

seemed like a great idea even though I had no idea what I was getting myself into. But I love every minute of it!"

Sharon Derico, Notre Dame's vice principal for academics, said it was obvious from the very beginning that McGinnis was made for Notre Dame and that the school seemed tailor-made for her.



Susan McGinnis gave up a long career in the automotive industry to become a teacher. In the photo above taken this summer, McGinnis is at Lavender Hill Farm in Horton Bay, Michigan.

"It is clear that students really appreciate her dedication to them both in the classroom and as the NDP robotics moderator," Derico said. "Susan dedicates countless hours to this school and to her students. She frequently meets individually with students outside of class time to give additional assistance and her vibrant personality is recognized by the entire school community."

For McGinnis, she said she also appreciates the sense of family that seems to permeate every nook and cranny of the school.

"Everyone is super friendly and helpful, and the teachers all seem committed to helping the students, not just in their content area, but to be the best person they can be and, of course, to live the mission,"

McGinnis said. "Plus, it seems there are always kids in the building — I

just love that."

During those rare times when she herself is not in the building, McGinnis bides her time at home in Oxford with her "very bad dog, Diesel," and a cat named Castor. In addition, she's an avid gardener, knitter, cook/baker, and is currently in the middle of restoring her house, which was

built in 1871.

"I do carpentry, finish work, plaster work, plumbing and electrical — you name it," she said. "When I'm not working on the house, I spoil my niece and nephews horribly, and talk about them incessantly. I have a great family — two brothers and a sister, one niece and eight nephews — who love me unconditionally. And I'm a Pinterest addict, I love music and I'm a huge fan of Harry Potter and British mysteries."

Meanwhile, back at school, McGinnis said she cannot imagine anything more fulfilling for a career.

"I think helping students learn to become young adults, to take responsibility for their actions, learn how to communicate properly, and to be honest are all just as important as teaching class," she said. "I tell my students that regardless of what it is, be honest, own up to it and things will work out. I make mistakes all the time, we all make mistakes. It's what makes us all human. The tragedy, though, is not learning from those mistakes."

Derico noted that since McGinnis is so humble and such a tenacious learner herself, she's "a great example of a faculty member committed not only to each and every one of her students, but to our entire school community. We are blessed to have her on staff." 🍷

FOOD, from page 3

school communities is based on our philosophy of ‘nourishing a brighter future.’”

Mulligan added that their team of food and nutrition experts is dedicated entirely to creating fun, healthful and innovative dining solutions for private and independent school communities like the one at Notre Dame.

“Fresh, healthful food preparation on utilizing batch cooking techniques and locally and sustainably sourced ingredients has always been the cornerstone of the company’s operating philosophy,” he said.

Notre Dame’s Block added that because of the cultural diversity and varied dietary preferences of Notre Dame’s students and staff, Flik’s on-site management team will create menus exclusively for the school. He also said that balances, account numbers, procedures, etc., from last year will all carry-over with the new provider.

“Flik’s onsite nutrition specialist and corporate executive chef will review menus and provide culinary and dietary expertise so that students can explore more variety in their food and learn the importance of making healthful choices that hopefully will lead to a lifetime of smart eating,” Block said. 🍌🥗

IT, from page 3

casting, sharing of sites and for locking screens when that becomes necessary.”

He said they will be holding a workshop for faculty soon on the new system.

Additionally, Notre Dame, which in April was named one of only 60 Microsoft Associate Showcase schools in the U.S.,



entered into a new agreement with Microsoft that allows the school to install Office 2016 on other devices, including Macs, tablets and smartphones.

Konja also wanted to note that the school’s primary education technology platform, Haiku Learning, has been rebranded as “PowerSchool Learning” due to a recent corporate acquisition. He doesn’t expect any major differences initially other than the new name and logos. 🍌🥗

Grounded in faith (and the Cavs)

During the summer break, in a conversation with new Notre Dame campus minister Fr. Ron Nikodem, s.m., he said he was looking forward to his upcoming tenure at the school. And while completely dedicated to his responsibilities at Notre Dame and at other stops during his Marist ministry, this Cleveland, Ohio, native manages to fit in what could only be described as a “rabid” fandom for all things Cleveland sports.

Fr. Jim Strasz, s.m., who teaches religion in Notre Dame’s upper division and serves as director of the school’s Marist Way initiative, with tongue firmly in cheek told others at a luncheon for school head Fr. Leon Olszamowski, s.m., that he thinks “Fr. Ron is at the restaurant because he mistakenly thought it was a luncheon honoring (Cleveland Cavalier basketball player) LeBron James.”

It’s not only Cleveland basketball for Nikodem though.

“I am a huge sports fan and winning the NBA title was great,” he said. “But, as you probably know (as of this writing), the Cleveland Indians are in first place, so maybe two championships in the same year?!”

Meanwhile, back in Pontiac, Nikodem, 68, was preparing for the upcoming school year. “I am very happy to be part of the Marist presence in the school at all levels,” he said. He also firmly believes in the significant role campus ministry plays at NDPMA.

“Campus ministry is very important,” he said. “Classes, sports and extracurricular activities must be grounded in something. This is where our faith and campus ministry come in. Without our faith, these other things have very little meaning.”

Prior to coming to Notre Dame, Nikodem had spent more than 20 years as a Marist

servant in ministries mainly in the U.S. Most recently he served 10 years as pastor at Holy Rosary Church in Buckhannon, W.Va., where he ministered to families that include many former coal miners or lumber workers.

Holy Rosary is in an area of the country where the local economy does not always benefit from peaks in the surrounding regional or national economies, according to Nikodem. He remembers the Sago Mine collapse, which occurred in the area in January 2006 and unfortunately killed 12 of 13 miners who were trapped in the mine.

But despite that tragedy and the area’s relative small size and financial challenges, Nikodem said Holy Rosary was a hearty and dynamic parish where faith and selfless giving come together in service to the wider community.

In an article originally published in a Marist newsletter in 2013, Nikodem said he and others at the parish practice their ministry with the local soup kitchen and with other churches to help spread ecumenism. “We emphasize heavily the Marist spirit and charisma at meetings, prayer services, gatherings and all that we do. We are trying to be the ‘hidden and unknown’ leaders of the area,” he said.

Prior to Holy Rosary in West Virginia, Nikodem was stationed at St. Louis Church in St. Paul, Minn., for five years, Marist School in Atlanta, Ga., for five years and St. Joseph Church in Marietta, Ga., for two years.

Nikodem said during this interview back in late July that while it was summer and the Notre Dame campus was sparsely populated, he’s nonetheless felt at home and accepted. “Notre Dame and the community have been very gracious and welcoming,” he said. “So far, so good. It seems like a very good fit for me.” 🍌🥗



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Notre Dame begins construction of school addition

Construction begins this month on a 7,200 square-foot expansion of Pontiac Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy's lower division, which has experienced a recent uptick in enrollment.

According to Andy Guest, interim president of NDPMA, initial site preparation for the addition will include sod removal, fencing relocation and some parking readjustment.

"We are very pleased to be able to start this project well ahead of winter, which will give us a real opportunity to meet our goal of completing the addition by the school's second semester," said Guest.


Notre Dame's lower division, which moved from Waterford

in 2013 to a new facility on the school's main campus in Pontiac, has experienced substantial growth in enrollment since then and its 12 classrooms will grow to 18 when construction is completed in late 2016 or early 2017. The division educates students in junior-kindergarten through grade 5.

"When we built the lower division, we did so in a way that it could be easily expanded if the demand was there,"

Guest said. "Since we announced the move of the lower division, we have seen a 45% increase in enrollment, so expansion became necessary to meet the demand. We are delighted that more families want such a Catholic educational experience and we are pleased to provide it."

Each of the new classrooms will be the same size as the current classrooms and an additional restroom and entrance/exit also are planned as part of the \$1.1 million expansion.

The project team for the new construction includes Anderson Eckstein and Westrick, Inc., and Frank Rewold and Son Inc. 



The expansion in the lower division will provide space for three additional classes in the Jr.K through 2nd grade levels and three classrooms that can be used for special subjects such as language, arts and music.



The expansion of Notre Dame's lower division will add six new classrooms, a restroom and a new entrance/exit to the south end of the existing classroom building.