Dear Friends,

We are excited to share with you our new publication, Gesu School Spotlight! This edition shares a glimpse into our daily activities at Gesu School and what makes Gesu so unique in today’s educational landscape.

Each day at Gesu, our faculty and staff teach the values inherent in our Jesuit and IHM roots. We care for the whole child and provide a holistic education to 450 children in Pre-K through 8th grade, without selective admissions.

This year, we are emphasizing the MAGIS of Gesu: motivation, awareness, grit, independence, and social competence. In addition to meeting each student’s academic needs and honing each student’s talents, we are shaping these “soft skills” that build character and ensure future success.

Thank you for being part of the Gesu School community. We hope you enjoy the pages that follow.

Peace and blessings,

Bryan H. Carter
President and CEO

Sr. Ellen Convey, IHM
Principal
Cultivating Socially Conscious Scholars

Gesu 7th grade girls are cultivating a community garden around the corner at 17th and Stiles Streets. This fall, the girls raked leaves and planted bulbs. Science Lab Coordinator, Pat Leaf, initiated the project after attending the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s Green City Teachers program.

Teachers are integrating gardening lessons across grades and into the curriculum—science, math, and art. Plans are in the works for releasing butterflies and pruning the blooms this spring.

First-time gardener, Leaha, notes, “It’s fun and hard work.” She hopes “the space gets pretty and everything grows nicely” and that everyone will “have respect for it.”

These budding scientists are building academic skills, while beautifying Gesu’s neighborhood and growing in teamwork.

“When students pass by, they can say, ‘Look at what Gesu students created.’ It gives them a sense of pride in their neighborhood.”

–Pat Leaf, Science Lab Coordinator
For over 20 years, Gesu School has been a trailblazer in urban education. Single-gender education in grades 3-8 empowers students to stay focused and strengthen self-esteem.

Third grade girls share their vision as President of the United States. Their teacher, Mary Liva, inspires her students daily and serves as a strong role model.

—Mary Liva, Grade 3 Girls Teacher
Dream Quilt to Commemorate Martin Luther King Day 2017
Becoming Young “Men and Women for Others”

“Our children understand the meaning of this Jesuit principle. All that we have at Gesu School is because many have been ‘men and women for others’ for our students.”

— Bryan Carter, President and CEO

For Thanksgiving, Gesu School students collected over 30 crates of canned and boxed foods to donate to food pantries in local parishes. Students presented the donations at Mass.

Starting in Pre-K, Gesu students begin to absorb the Jesuit mantra to become young “men and women for others.” They learn about the Magis—ever striving to do and be “greater” for the service of God—by contributing to their communities.

“Being a young ‘man for others’ means to help any and everybody, no matter the situation. I feel like it is a goal that the Gesu family tries to establish in every student.”

— Christopher, Grade 8
Providing Critical Out-of-School-Time Learning (and Fun!)

Gesu’s Academic Summer Camp brims with creative activities! Students learned about the traditional Japanese art form of Gyotaku and created vibrant imprints on their own t-shirts.

Dedicated volunteers and supporters help to bring unique opportunities for learning and exploration. Thank you to volunteers—Keith Pension, Gesu Board Member, and Lori Eckert—for sharing this project with our students.

Gesu’s Academic Summer Camp blends study with summer fun, while meeting the needs of working parents and offering a safe environment for students to continue learning and growing.

“I love being in a place where creative thinking and innovative ideas are not only tolerated, but welcomed. For more than 12 years, students have had fun with this unique art project.”

—Keith Pension, Secretary of Gesu School Board of Directors and 2015 Spirit Medalist
Nurturing Creativity and Talent

City Poem by Kyle, Grade 7

From time to time
We see the change
From the ground to the sky
The city is changing

Construction makes workers
Go from an idea
To a crane
And from that crane to a building frame

The skyscrapers grow taller and taller
They make the world around look smaller
And nowadays all you see is metal
From the skies to the ground it’s like a flower’s petal

That can grow and flow
And evolve o’ so slow
To mix together like dough
And frolic together like a group of willows

If everyone works together
We can not only change the weather
But change all hate into a feather
And let it fly away altogether
Exceeding Expectations: Leroy Brown ’13

“Ms. Gilbert built my confidence to a whole other level. I always thought I was the underdog or not good enough or not smart enough. She always said the opposite—that I was very bright and that I could do whatever I put my mind to. She is a guardian angel in my life.”

— Leroy Brown ’13

In 8th grade, Leroy Brown ’13 capitalized on Gesu’s learning support. Grit and caring teachers helped him to achieve: “Gesu instilled a light in me, from the first day in Pre-K. They had faith in me and encouraged me, so I felt it was my obligation to prove them right.” Today, Leroy is enrolled in honors classes at Roman Catholic High School and was recently inducted into the National Honor Society.

Leroy personifies the MAGIS of Gesu—a foundation that catapulted him to success. Student Council President of Roman Catholic and a wrestling team captain, Leroy will attend Ursinus College with a scholarship. Graduate school and a nursing career await.

The MAGIS of Gesu

Motivation
Awareness
Grit
Independence
Social Competence