

## Summer Academy

They came from Simsbury, Avon, Farmington, Suffield, Torrington, and many other towns, and they came from Hartford... to learn and enjoy enrichment experiences at Ethel Walker's Summer Academy. Thanks to the generosity of our partner school, Grace Academy students continued their educational experience on the beautiful campus of the Ethel Walker School. The Summer Academy offers classes in robotics, eco-ventures, arts and crafts, tennis and other athletic activities. For Grace Academy students, their day began with two hours of academic instruction; one hour of English Language Arts and one hour of math held in air conditioned classrooms on the campus. Following the academic lessons, GA girls joined students who were participating in the enrichment activities offered at the Ethel Walker Academy. Grace Academy girls and Ethel Walker Academy students (girls and boys) worked together to build robots; create art projects with paints, beads, and collages; or explore the world through eco-venture activities.

Grace Academy believes that a student's overall educational experience is not limited to the traditional academic year. Therefore, GA requires its students to participate in a four-week long summer session. This required program takes place during the month of June/July. It reinforces lessons learned during the previous year and introduces lessons to be discovered during the anticipated year. The morning academic sessions are taught by GA teachers with Ethel Walker teachers leading the enrichment activities.

During the first week, students read stories and wrote essays about colonial life in New England. The week culminated in a trip to the Mystic Seaport Museum (funded by a grant from Target). Students discovered first-hand what life was like on a whaling ship and how the fisheries industry depended upon rope makers, steel for harpoon, timber for boat builders and salt for food preservation. They also learned about the role immigrants and Americans of African descent played in the maritime industries, as well as many other aspects that powered the economy and communal life in a seaport town.



*Natalia Allen and Zaire Edwards share a moment of rest at the Summer Academy.*

During week two, students made an excursion to Hammonasset State Park where they explored tide pools and learned about the vital estuaries that teem with life along the shore. The "fourth" week was open to students at one of two Girl Scout camps. Thanks to Girl Scouts of Connecticut, GA students were offered a fully funded experience at one of the Girl Scouts' day or sleep-away camps. The summer's academic courses, enrichment activities, experiential learning field trips, outdoor activities, and the sharing in meals encourage character development, team building and leadership skills.

The Summer Academy is an essential component of the school's academic program. Academic research indicates that summer learning loss can be detrimental to low-income students and ultimately increases the educational gap between middle-income and low-income students. The mandatory summer program effectively addresses this issue by providing an academic experience for each student during the summer. The GA Summer Academy serves as a bridge where students can build upon their learning, enhance life skills, and personal character development by continuing to explore the values of our mission: respect for others, leadership, creative thinking and problem-solving, motivation and goal-setting, compassion, hospitality, joy and grace. The spirit and energy the students gain in GA's Summer Academy are essential in the creation of a community of learning.

# Ethel Walker Summer Academy/ Hammonasset State Park

Grace Academy students extended their academic year with classes at Ethel Walker School and field trips to Mystic Seaport and Hammonasset State Park.



*Recess break on the campus of Ethel Walker School.*



*Tanasia Marrett and Thi Ri Soe demonstrate their robot during the Robotics Activity.*



*Exploring a tide pool at Hammonasset State Park.*



*Sabrina Williams, Natalia Allen and Maya Tardif investigate shore life.*



*Smiling faces at Hammonasset.*

# Spring Activities

Tuesdays, from 4:30 to 5:30 PM, are devoted to educational or cultural activities. During the fourth quarter, students could choose to be involved in: Girl Scouts, Gardening, Journalism (the school newspaper *North Star*) or Far Out Far East. The Far Out Far East activity was led by Deckie Jeffers, a former teacher who has traveled extensively in Asia. Students discovered the foods, dress, culture, religions, and life of the people from Eastern Asia.



*Left: Cyndi Dodd (with hat) oversees the planting of flowers and vegetables for the Garden Club.*

*Above: Garden Club members Jessica Hariprasad, Melanie Mejjaswasy, Thi Ri Soe, Sha Lay Paw and Catherine Cabra display a bounty of lettuce and kale.*

*Below: North Star editorial board (school newspaper). Back row: Phil Drew, moderator, Paola Ocasio, Rethea White, Anoshka Vargas. Front row: Brianna Washington, Victoria Vazquez, Kayla Walton.*

*Right: Deckie Jeffers, moderator of the Far Out Far East Club, Leslie Ferri, Tanasia Marrett, Lisa Caraballo, Joeliz Gonzalez, and Natalia Allen (sitting).*



## Ellen Moller: Master Teacher from Denmark

*Ellen Bang Moller, a resident of Frederiksberg, Denmark, volunteered as a teacher and instructional coach from January to March. She co-taught English and Math, and developed a course on Danish culture for Social Studies. Ellen collaborated with teachers, assisted with lesson planning, shared specific collaborative strategies, and provided professional development through her own modeling. Ellen was especially helpful in training teachers to create collaborative planning environments where students work together to explore new concepts. Below is a personal letter from Ellen summarizing her experience.*

Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January, 2011 was a special and exciting day for me. This day was the beginning of my adventure at Grace Academy. I didn't quite know what to expect. I only knew that for the next three months, 73 Cannon Road, East Hartford, Connecticut would be my home, Grace Academy my working place and two sisters named Elaine and Rosemary my nearest "family."

I left a snowy Denmark and seemed to have brought the winter with me overseas, because the first month in Hartford was extremely cold and filled with snow. That is when I became familiar with the expression "snow days", days when school is closed because of a heavy snowfall! To me this was an unusual and funny expression- considering that in Denmark snow is no excuse for not coming to school! I guess we may be more used to it. Fortunately, given the snowy winter, once in a while I did get the chance to go to work.

Quickly it became obvious to me that the school was not only located geographically many miles away from my school in Denmark, but the everyday life for the students was also a world apart. In Denmark I teach in a school located in one of the wealthiest areas of the country, and the students come from some of the wealthiest families. At Grace Academy the situation was

the complete opposite. The big differences between the two groups of students in everyday life were clarified during my first day at the school, when the students at Grace Academy each received a gift to celebrate Three Kings Day. Although the gift was practical- for instance a scarf, a pair of slippers or gloves- I will never forget their immediate happiness. Their faces shone like the sun while they were dancing around, delighted with their gift! What a difference! At my Danish school, children are more careless and take their parents' wealth for granted. You can often hear them say "I want that...", "I got that..." Sometimes that makes you wonder if they are too spoiled- but of course that is not the children's fault.

It didn't take many days to find out that the teachers and the staff at Grace Academy work very hard. They do an amazing job trying to help these girls succeed, and they face challenges that I had never dealt with before, because most of these students have a troubled background. But as time passed, I found a way in which I could try to give my contribution to the school by using and telling about what I believe is important regarding universal teaching ideas and methods.

I believe that teaching must engage students' participation in the lesson as much as possible and that structure and classroom management must be consistent and defined. But it is also important to meet every student with demands and expectations, because that will help them grow. Luckily, the teachers were extremely positive and open towards me and my ideas, and the students accepted me and my ideas as well. And in the end, I saw that despite the difference between my Danish school and Grace Academy



...continued on page 5.

*“Ellen Moller...”  
...continued from page 4*

children are just children- and all of them have beauty in being straight forward, challenging and unique, no matter where they live and where they come from. And through our teaching we challenge the children and thereby help them grow, but I can thank them for that too! - They make me grow! Meeting such a different group of students made me realize that more than ever.

Now I am back in Denmark. In many ways nothing has changed here, but still, in some way,

I see some things differently because I have changed. I spent only three months in the U.S, which passed by so quickly, but I certainly had a once in a lifetime experience and got a new perspective on life. And in my heart I brought my “American family” with me home to Denmark, because their kindness and warm hearts made the months in Hartford a time of summer despite the cold winter outside. I was and am grateful for our friendship.

## A sampling of Saturday Sessions, Events and Clubs

*Right: Romelia Mejias, Pres. of Parent Council expresses her appreciation to all parents for their efforts to make the Book Fair and year-end showcase a great success.*

*Below: Soroptomist members Kathleen Oyanadel, Dorien Boon van Ostade and Doraine Alemoni created a dojo in Gray Hall on a Saturday.*

*Lower Right: Kayla Walton demonstrates her self-defense techniques while Ximena Franco looks on.*



## Rising Star Program for 4th and 5th graders

On May 23, Grace Academy opened its doors to fourth and fifth grade girls for its first after-school preparatory program. The *Rising Star* after-school and summer studies program was made possible through a grant from the *Northeast Mercy Mission Fund*. A total of 24 fourth and fifth graders gathered at 3:30 PM for two hours of math and English Language Arts instruction. Led by Sister Janice Kidney, RSM, a full-time tutor at Grace Academy with over 25 years of classroom instruction, and Megan Drusedum, a summer intern, the *Rising Star* program gives students a taste of Grace Academy's culture.

Sr. Janice and Megan engaged the girls in fun ice-breaking activities each day before introducing the academic objectives for the remainder of the afternoon. The sessions combine classroom instruction in English (ELA) and math, group work, and quiet time to complete assignments. *Rising Star* students are encouraged and supported in their academic activities. The program is structured so that each

student takes ownership of her learning, feels responsible for her work, and yet has the support of the teachers who are available for assistance.

On June 20, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders began a week of full-day instruction and activities. The morning was devoted to math and ELA instruction. A hot lunch meal was provided by *House of Bread*. The afternoon session was led by renowned quilt maker and educator, Ed Johnetta Miller, featured on the December 2010 cover of *Hartford Magazine*. Ms. Miller taught the girls the art and history of quilt making. The week culminated in the construction of a large quilt that hangs in the Grace Academy library. Following the three week program, 15 girls were invited to join the fifth grade and three students were invited to join the sixth grade. Grace Academy is excited to welcome its new students into our unique community and we look forward to helping them grow into talented, strong, young women.



*Lizzmarie Hoy concentrates on her sewing technique under the watchful eye of Ed Johnetta Miller.*



*Ed Johnetta Miller guides Paw Ta Shu while her friends look on.*

## Word of the Day

**grat-i-tude** \gra-t-tüd, -tyüd\  
noun

noun

the quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful

L. gratus “thankful, pleasing” (see **grace**).

**Synonyms:** appreciation, appreciativeness, gratefulness, thanks, thankfulness

**Gratitude, thankfulness, gratefulness, or appreciation** is a feeling, emotion or attitude in acknowledgment of a benefit that one has received or will receive. The experience of gratitude has historically been a focus of several world religions, and has been considered extensively by moral philosophers.

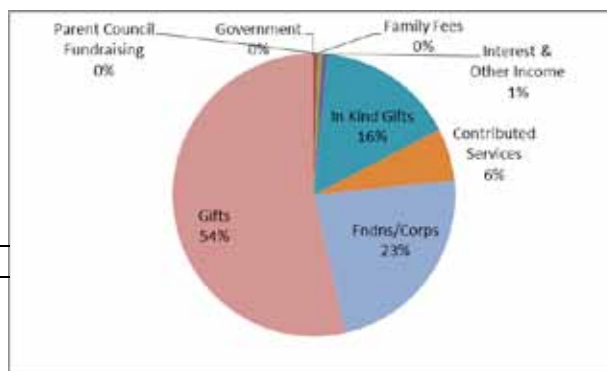
### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

#### November 2009 through June 2011

##### INCOME 2009-2011

Gifts	\$332,487
Foundations/Corporations	\$142,653
Interest & Other Income	\$ 3,984
Family Fees	\$ 2,370
Parent Council Fundraising	\$ 3,264
Government	\$ 0

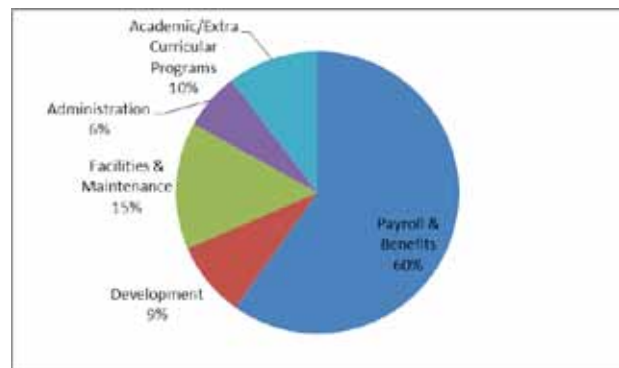
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$484,758</b>
In-Kind Gifts	\$98,177
Contributed Services	\$37,000
<i>With In-Kind Gifts &amp; Services</i>	<i>\$ 619,935</i>



##### EXPENSES 2009-2011

Payroll & Benefits	\$ 179,670
Development	\$ 25,987
Facilities & Maintenance	\$ 43,642
Administration	\$ 19,537
Academic/Extra Curricular Programs	\$ 31,357

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$300,193**



\*These figures reflect the un-audited financial statements of Grace Academy for the two year period of 2009-2011; the planning/implementation phase and first academic year.

Letter from the Head of School:

Long before a name could be found for our school, a core group of dedicated individuals answered a need for a tuition-free, faith-based middle school for underserved girls from Hartford. In its journey from dream to reality, the founding members brought energy and personal talents to a school that would inspire in students: a love of learning, an awareness of their own interests and ideas, a fundamental understanding of culture, and an abiding sense of responsibility to their community. The excitement generated by this journey was imbued with love, kindness, gratitude and a profound sense of grace. And, when the name “Grace” was finally proposed, the Steering Committee knew it was a natural fit.

We are serving middle school for girls of different races, ethnic groups and religions from families of limited economic means. Our vision is to empower the students to become agents of transformation in their families, communities and society. The long-term goal is for each student to become a well-educated college graduate, self-assured, and grounded in her own spirituality whereby her personal passions will intersect with the world’s great needs. They will be leaders who make a difference.

The Board believes every child deserves a quality education. They dreamt of a community where children could both give and be loved, a community where each child’s needs were heard and met. Incredibly, with the help of so many people (all of whom we attempted to list in this report) that dream is now a reality. The parents who have been with us for the first year say thank you. That thank you reverberates around our entire community. We thank our parents for the ways their child has impacted us. We thank the teachers for their heroic work. We thank the volunteers who keep this place alive with active peace and youthful vigor. We thank the donors, whose generosity has made Grace Academy part of the solution for underserved girls.

Four Orders of Catholic religious sisters believed in us and joined us. The Steering Committee helped guide the formation of the school. The South Church congregation embraced our mission and became a partner with us. Generous donors and volunteers followed – women and men, businesses, foundations, churches, private schools, and community organizations. Then came our parents, who took a leap of faith in signing their daughters up in a new school. They all believed...and for this we are grateful. This first annual report is a testament to all those who made Grace Academy a reality.

With gratitude,

*Matt Fitzsimons*

Matthew O’N. Fitzsimons  
Head of School

*May today there be peace within.*

*May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.*

*May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.*

*May you use those gifts that you have received,*

*and pass on the love that has been given to you.*

*May you be content knowing you are a child of God.*

*Let this presence settle into your bones,*

*and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.*

*It is there for each and every one of us.*

Prominently displayed in my office is this prayer from St. Theresa of Avila. The prayer reminds me daily that what we’re doing for Grace Academy is allowing the girls to sing, dance, love, and, most importantly, give them the freedom to be themselves in a safe, secure environment. The infinite possibilities that we provide Grace Academy students – academics, arts, culture, friendship, and community – are made possible by the many people listed in our report. Grace Academy would not have been possible without the support of our community. All of you, as friends, volunteers and benefactors, helped us to bring the Grace Academy vision to life.

- Volunteers from Leadership Greater Hartford helped create our school’s library; many other volunteers sorted books, painted the gym, built flower/vegetable boxes, distributed admissions fliers across Hartford, served as translators, moved furniture, built shelves, cleaned floors and walls, and worked behind the scenes to incorporate the school, secure its 501(c)3 status, secure busing and nursing services, and eRate funding.
- Benefactors have been generous with financial support
- Many donors gave vital in-kind gifts from our wish list – computers, telephone system, school supplies, refrigerator, uniforms, athletic supplies and clothing, desks, white boards, and much, much more.
- Friends have prayed for our girls, our teachers, and the families we serve...and I can assure you those prayers manifested themselves in beautiful moments of grace.

I want to thank you for all you have done to make this school a reality. Your generosity has enabled us to bring a vision to life. We have come a long way in two years, from a small group of dedicated individuals who realized the need for a tuition-free, private faith-based education to a school that is providing an intensive, holistic education to underserved girls from Hartford.

Serving as Chair of the Board has been a blessing for me, and Grace Academy is at the top of the great things that have happened in my life. The challenge to meet our fundraising objectives is a growing one but we are blessed by people like you who care about our mission. I thank you for keeping Grace Academy at the top of your own worthy causes and for your continued generous support.

With deepest gratitude,

*Wendy Allerton*

Chair, Grace Academy Board of Directors

Since its founding, many people have shared their personal gifts with the students at our school. Included here are three reflections: Katie Ives, a student at Miss Porter's School who visits weekly to instruct students in guitar, and two professionals who shared their personal stories at the daily assembly- the Circle of Peace and Respect.

*Dear Mr. Fitzsimons,*

*Thank you so much for inviting me to visit Grace Academy, share the Poetry with the students and participate in the Peace Circle. I so enjoyed my visit and tour.*

*It is very clear that you have begun a very special school that will allow so many young women to grow, learn and develop into strong, confident, "phenomenal" women! Keep up the great work and I hope to visit again.*

*Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D.*

### AMAZING GRACE (\$20,000+)

Anonymous  
Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation  
Maximilian & Marion Hoffman Foundation  
George Link Jr. Charitable Trust  
Ted & Tracy McCourtney  
Marge Morrissey

### FULL OF GRACE (\$10,000-\$19,999)

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DeskNet, Inc.  
The Fund for Greater Hartford  
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
Luis & Cindy Martinez  
Lori & Liam McGee  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
Paul & Lynne Vanderslice

### SAVING GRACE (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Aurora Foundation for Women & Girls  
Mr. John Charette  
Paul & Dolores Cusson  
John & Dawn McCarrick  
Lindsey & Scott McPhee  
William & Alice Mortensen Foundation  
William & Susan Whelan

### BOUNTIFUL GRACE (\$1,000-\$4,999)

Mr. James Considine  
Elliot & Spencer Decker  
Jeff & Jane Digel  
Tracy & George Fischer  
Matt & Sarah Fitzsimons  
Tim Frey & Mary Lou Ruch  
Sandy Bender Fromson &

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Janel & Robert Simpson  
Tom Sliney  
Soroptimist International of Farmington Valley  
William H. Wills

### GRACEFUL (\$500-\$999)

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Ed & Peggy Bonanno  
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Youth Service America

### THANKFUL GRACE (<\$500)

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Wendy & Tim Allerton  
Neill and Mary McAllister  
Andre Furniture Industries, LLC  
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David Bollinger  
Tim & Debbie Brennan  
Jean & Christopher Brewer  
Matthew and Christine Bromberg  
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Catherine Carlisi  
Lynnette Colon-Ayala  
Mike & Maureen Considine  
Mary E. Crozier  
Fran D'Amico

Diana Delucia  
Burke Doar  
Jeff, Gail & Andrea Ferrell  
Brian & Lisa Fitzsimons  
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Victoria Gallo  
Clayton & Ashley Gengras  
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Herbert & Nancy Gleason  
Gloria Grafer  
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Patrice Guiney  
Michele Harris  
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Jon & Gretchen Huber  
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Paul & Jean Lahr  
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Tom & Ann Steinle  
Donna Stiglmeier  
Judy Stonger, CPP  
Maggie Sullivan  
Cynthia & Neil Toland  
Elaine Yungk  
Bradley Zeligson

## GIFTS IN KIND

### AMAZING GRACE (\$20,000+)

South Congregational Church

### FULL OF GRACE (\$10,000-\$19,999)

McMillan/McGraw Hill  
(Virginia Moran)

### SAVING GRACE (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Aetna, Inc.  
Ramsaran Maharajh  
Tammi Flowers

*Dear Mr. Fitzsimons,*

*Thank you so much for allowing me such a great opportunity! I had such a blast, and teaching the girls at Grace Academy guitar will definitely impact me for the rest of my life. I remember coming up to you after your presentation at my school and asking if there was any possibility of allowing me to teach guitar. It's come a long way since then (in a short period of time!), and I just wanted to thank you for helping all of this come together so well. It has brought so much purpose into my life. Hope you enjoy the T-shirt and print-outs (keep practicing!)*

*Katie Ives*

### BOUNTIFUL GRACE (\$1,000-\$4,999)

Robert J. Bourne, Esq.  
Frank Corda  
FaithCare  
Edgar & Linda Fitzsimons  
Mary & Tom Ives  
Billy Lavalee  
Total Relocation Services  
(Chris Marzo)  
Lori & Liam McGee  
Marge Morrissey  
Mercik, Kuczarski & Bolduc, LLC  
University of Notre Dame  
Alumni Club  
Saint Ann's Elementary School,  
Milford  
Saint Joseph College

Saint Joseph Elementary School,  
Norwich  
Saint Rose Elementary School,  
East Hartford  
Saint Thomas the Apostle,  
West Hartford  
Janel & Robert Simpson  
Simsbury Rotary Club  
(Mr. Ron LaCandro)  
Solidus, Inc. (John A. Charette)  
Dr. Ann Strong

### GRACEFUL (\$500-\$999)

Hands on Hartford  
Caley Henderson  
Robert Hurwich, Esq.  
Job Corps Volunteers of Hartford  
Mark Getts  
Pratt & Whitney Group  
US District Court  
(Rhonda Vermette)  
YMCA  
Tony Zeolla

### THANKFUL GRACE (<\$500)

Sharon & Skip Alleman  
Tim Allerton  
Liz & Frank Bice  
Catherine Carlisi  
Janet Cashman  
Bryan & Janine Cote  
Covenant Prep  
Trevor Dayton  
Cindy Deitlin  
Lawren & Ray DiDonna  
James & Falco  
Matt Fleury  
Norma Franco  
Karen Gilston  
Elena & Bill Gostic  
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Patrick & Diane Klingman  
Jane Korzeb  
Tim Malinguaggio  
Mike Marshall  
Lindsey McPhee  
Terry McQuillan & Lev White  
Bernie Michel  
Thea Montanez  
Beth & Jim Malley  
Tom Paulus  
South Church Women's Group  
South Windsor Little League  
Lynn Veldman  
Westminster School  
Vito's on the Park

## VOLUNTEERS

The following individuals have donated their time and talents to

enrich the Grace Academy community and make it the unique place that it is.

### MARKETING, OFFICE WORK, SITE READINESS

Randi Ashton-Pritting  
Paige Bailey  
The Bolduc Family  
Victoria Boop  
The Cashman Family  
Anne, Daniel, John Camilliere  
Caitlin Clarke  
Jeremy DiCarli  
East Catholic High School Students  
Tom Eisenmann  
Rhaema Friday  
Carolyn Horvath  
Lauren House  
John Huber  
Jon Hug  
Jen Leslie  
Molly Martel  
Marilyn Miranda  
Katie O'Gorman  
Mary Patterson  
Katie Serafini  
Mallory Tarca  
Alison Janes  
Cody Stewart  
Althea Webber

Northwest Catholic  
High School Cheerleaders  
2010-11 Leadership  
Greater Hartford Quest Team  
Susannah Hogendorn  
John K. Horvath  
Nicole Hughey  
Patrick Martin  
Marlyn Miranda  
Gil Pizano, Jr.  
Ewan Sheriff  
Amy Stankiewicz  
Althea Webber  
Iris White

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Rebekah Cholawa  
Lisa Fitzsimons  
Darragh Young  
Digel Family Foundation  
Sullivan & LeShane  
Pro Bono Partners Inc.  
Eugene Sheehan  
Robert Bourne  
Sara Vincent  
Tammi Flowers

Dan Tapper  
Robert Hurwich  
Ramsaran Maharajh

## TEACHER TRAINING

Wendy Allerton  
Marialice Curran, Ph.D.  
Sarah Lahr Fitzsimons  
Sonia Claus Gleason  
Kerry McPhee  
Marnie Paulus  
Mary Beth Pfeiffer

## SOROPTIMISTS

Leora Berns  
Dorien Boonvanostade  
Sue Bullock  
Karen Gilston  
Carol Gould  
Wendy Helmkamp  
Ilona House  
Michelle Jenks  
Emily Landers  
Kathy McAfee  
Sue McGann  
Julie McNeil  
Kathleen Oyanadel  
Linda Pulford  
Linda Terry

*Dear Matthew,*

*I want to take a moment to thank you for the time you allowed me to enter your classrooms and meet your fantastic students. While I was there in a professional capacity, the visit let a truly personal mark on my heart and spirit. Meeting with the girls was a high point of my very busy day (actually months).*

*I look forward to keeping abreast of what Grace Academy is up to through Janet Simpson and you.*

*All the best in the New Year!*

*Jacqui Johnson*

## Volunteer Profile Sushama Dhakite



### How did you first learn about Grace Academy?

I was searching for volunteer opportunities on [Volunteermatch.com](http://Volunteermatch.com) and came across Grace Academy. The opportunity and school looked interesting so I went to their website to learn more about the school. The idea of a school for girls from Hartford fascinated me, so I contacted the school to see how I could help.

### How have you helped Grace Academy?

I started at Grace Academy as a library volunteer. During the summer 2011, I worked on cataloging all of the books in the library. After that I have started to assist Mr. Fitzsimons and Ms. Gina with the office administration needs. I worked on a lot of different projects like updating the school database - EDUK12, the donor database - DonorTools, creating a school

calendar, organizing the server files, and other projects.

### What motivates you to serve organizations as a volunteer?

Seeing all the wonderful people at Grace who are making an effort towards a cause is very motivating. I think my knowledge and skills are being put to best use in Grace Academy.

### What do you like about Grace Academy?

I love the fact that all the teachers, staff and students are like a family. Everyone works with passion towards achieving the mission of Grace Academy.

### Do you have any suggestions for people who may be interested in volunteering?

There are a lot of different areas that one can contribute at Grace Academy.

It is a wonderful and rewarding experience to be a small part of this "Start of Hope in Hartford."

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE: BE A SPONSOR

### WHO WE SERVE:

43 UNIQUE, AMBITIOUS YOUNG WOMEN

LATINO – 47% • AFRICAN-AMERICAN – 27%

ASIAN – 11% • MIXED RACE – 7%

CARIBBEAN – 7% • CAUCASIAN – 1% •

87% LIVE IN HARTFORD

66% RAISED IN SINGLE PARENT

81% SERVED AT OR BELOW 200% FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL



*Katie Ives, a devoted volunteer and weekly guitar instructor from Miss Porter's School, leads Jayla Quintero and Ceanna Diaz in a musical number at the spring showcase.*

## Underwrite the cost of a Teaching Fellow, Full-Time Tutor or Student

### Teaching Fellow \$10,000

Grace Academy Teaching Fellows volunteer two years of their lives to serve our students. They are recent college graduates who bring tremendous energy, warmth, and understanding to the community. Their year begins in August with a packed schedule of training. Once school begins, their training continues on Tuesdays and on Professional Development Friday afternoons (held once per month) with seasoned educators who help them develop their instructional skills, answer questions and review the week's progress. Grace Academy depends upon the financial support of foundations, local businesses, and individuals to underwrite the cost of Teaching Fellows. Visit us and speak with our students. They will tell you that our Fellows are shaping their lives and setting them on a trajectory toward success in life.

### Full-Time Tutor \$ 7,500

Grace is fortunate to have a seasoned educator, a 30-year veteran teacher and member of the Sisters of Mercy as its full-time tutor. Religious sisters have dedicated their lives to the education of generations of children. While many of these religious women serve schools in the form of "contributed services", Grace Academy is rightly compensating its full-time tutor. You can help cover her costs.

### Student Sponsorships \$5,000

Our tuition free education to underserved girls from Hartford is made possible by friends like you. Your sponsorship will make possible the challenges and opportunities for education, character development, the building of positive self-esteem, and community-building that we are committed to providing our students. Donations to the Student Sponsorship Fund can take many forms: you can finance a scholarship yourself, or team up with co-workers and friends to create a scholarship.

## Teaching Fellow Profile – Ms. Sulva Bray

*Sulva Bray, a Notre Dame AmeriCorps volunteer, joined Grace Academy in August, 2010. Ms. Bray teaches fifth grade math, and Earth and Life science to 5th, 6th and 7th graders. She coaches cross country, volleyball, softball and track, and is the advisor to the fifth grade. Ms. Bray, a native of Maine, graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maine, Orono.*



### **Tell us about how you chose to become an AmeriCorps volunteer. And, how did you select Grace Academy?**

As I approached graduation, the direction of my next steps was uncertain. A friend of mine told me about AmeriCorps following our Alternative Spring Break trip. As service has always been a big part of my life, I thought AmeriCorps would be a natural fit. I reviewed the many options available and selected Grace Academy because I knew I wanted to work with children. After reading about the mission of Grace Academy and the *NativityMiguel* school network, I knew it was an organization I wanted to be a part of. The sense of community created by these unique schools, and the chance to succeed in a newly formed school is remarkable.

### **What words best express GA?**

I feel that the words ‘compassion’ and ‘joy’

express Grace Academy the best. I chose ‘compassion’ because we are constantly talking about the many layers of meaning of compassion in our classes. Through these discussions, I have seen the girls show compassion to their peers. Middle school is such a hard time for students and to have a place where everyone is compassionate creates a sense of community. I also chose ‘joy’ because the students here love to laugh and there is no shortness of it. It is refreshing to hear true laughter from a child, and I believe that here we are allowing the students to just be kids who can laugh and have fun while still learning.

### **What do you find most fulfilling?**

The most fulfilling thing for me is when a student finally understands a concept she has been struggling to learn.