

GRACE ACADEMY

A STAR OF HOPE IN HARTFORD

Fall 2014

Students Travel Back in Time to Discover Connecticut's Past

by Katherine Coursey

Upon entering Mystic Seaport, a Grace Academy student turned to one of the teachers, excitedly asking, "Miss, when are we going on the Pirates of the Caribbean ships?" While there was no swashbuckling in this particular student's future, she and the other Grace Academy students did get to embark upon a different journey of this year's summer extension theme: Four Centuries of Connecticut History!

Grace Academy is built around a philosophy that a student's overall educational experience is not limited to the traditional academic year. While many students lose valuable knowledge and skills over the summer vacation months, Grace Academy requires its students to participate in a four-week summer session. This summer session is an essential component of Grace Academy's mission to create a diverse and challenging academic program and reinforces lessons learned during the previous school year - especially emphasizing important math concepts and reading comprehension skills - so that students are ready to plunge ahead into a new academic year in the fall.

This summer's theme centered around immersing the students into the rich history of their home state by visiting notable historic properties in

Connecticut, including the Hempstead Houses, Mystic Seaport, the Nathan Hale House, the Buttolph-Williams House, the Isham-Terry House and Gillette Castle. Supported in part by the Henry E. Niles Foundation, students were able to "travel back in time"



Kyoe Paw gains first-hand knowledge of life at the Nathan Hale House from a period-dressed instructor.

and experience daily life in four different centuries. Whether writing with a quill pen or learning herbal remedies for headaches, students quickly learned how different day to day life was long ago!

At each site, Grace Academy students were tasked to become experts on a different facet of Connecticut culture.

Members of the rising eighth grade Marian Anderson class were given leadership roles and were required to lead small group learning circles where students asked questions to docents, jotted down notes, and made cultural comparisons to other locations and points in history. Back at school, each small group of students held conferences to discuss how their pre-selected cultural topic changed and developed over four hundred years. Their final reflections and research can be found in the Grace Academy Summer Extension Blog at www.4centuriesofthistory.wordpress.com.

Aside from blogging and visiting historical locations, students additionally attended

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Where They Are Now: Graduates Having Success In & Out Of The Classroom



Class of 2013 graduates, L to R: Paola, Kayla, Joeliz, Destiny, Ximena, Ceanna, Thi Ri Soe, Jessica, Zaire

Kayla Walton admits that she had doubts about her ability to handle high school after Grace Academy. Yet, in her freshman year at Northwest Catholic she began to realize she could handle the work and “the education I had at Grace really prepared me.” Walton earned a 3.39 GPA.

Ximena Franco played volleyball and Zumba on the way to a 3.68 GPA at Ethel Walker, which included two honors courses in math and physics “that wouldn’t have been possible without Grace’s preparation.”

Joeliz Gonzalez moved from the honor roll to high honors at CT River Academy – she made the volleyball team and in her free time volunteers at Grace.

Jessica Hariprasad played a role in Ethel Walker’s spring musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, and achieved a 3.24 GPA. She says Grace helped her prioritize school work and activities.

These are four examples of how graduates are finding the right balance of social, arts, athletics and academics.

In all, six of Grace Academy’s nine 2013 graduates stayed on their high school’s freshman academic honor roll in all four marking periods—two moved

up to high honors—and three other students have worked closely with Grace Academy’s graduate support program to help them earn honor roll status this year.

“A Grace Academy education does not end at graduation,” says Matt Fitzsimons, Head of School. “Our Graduate Support Director, a high school counselor, and volunteers work one-on-one with graduates in a focused program to help students in high school as they then prepare for college.”

Paola Ocasio is working with GA’s graduate support program director to help her better prepare for mid-term exams and improve upon a 2.7 freshman GPA. Others get important social support, such as help finding the right clubs or sports to play.

One graduate, Thi Ri Soe, made her freshman basketball team at Northwest Catholic, but also acknowledged that finding friends was difficult in such a big school. Her GA religion teacher, Janine Cote, interceded by counseling Thi Ri to stay involved with sports and activities. Thi Ri followed her advice and joined the tennis team in the spring. Grace Academy’s approach to Graduate Support involves many people in the school’s community. The Graduate Support Director, teachers, Ms. Gina, and willing volunteers intervene where needed to help graduates navigate the high school world, academically and socially. All of our graduates have GPAs above 2.4 and 67% of them are on the honor roll. Here are highlights from each of our graduates:

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Ceanna Diaz - East Catholic

A lover of the sciences, Ceanna’s favorite subject was biology freshman year and now physics as she starts her sophomore year. The teachers at East Catholic are the school’s most prominent feature and she finds that “they really care about me and other students.” She says Grace Academy was “really hard” but “as I look back, I’m thankful because the academics and homework prepared me.” Ceanna is currently on the honor roll.

Zaire Edwards – Academy of the Arts

Zaire, when asked how GA prepared her for high school, said, “Grace Academy really prepared me for high school. They told us what to expect as well as what we could expect in the real world.” Zaire’s favorite subject during her first year was science. She has developed two close friendships and remains connected with her friends from Grace. Zaire earned a 2.46 GPA.

Ximena Franco – Ethel Walker School

Ximena loved her first year. It was “intimidating” but there were no cliques, which allowed her to associate freely. Ximena is involved in volleyball, Zumba, and tennis. “All the teachers are awesome but the Geometry teacher made math fun!” She skipped a level in math because of the things she learned at Grace and moved into honors physics as well. Ximena most enjoyed meeting new people. “It’s nerve-wracking but worth it!” She, too, remains connected to GA through the close friendships. Ximena moved from the honor roll to high honors at the end of last year with a 3.68 GPA.

Joeliz Gonzalez - CT River Academy

The new River Academy was not completed in time for the opening of school. Joeliz and her school mates began the year in temporary facilities with class transitions among a few small buildings. That made the transition difficult, but the teachers were friendly and “wanted to see all of us succeed”. By January all the students were under one roof! Joeliz quickly started to excel in school: she joined the volleyball team in the spring and is playing volleyball this fall and by the end of her freshman year had moved onto the “high honor roll” with a 3.67 GPA. Joeliz stays in touch with her Grace teachers and with her classmates. She’s also involved in Family Night at South Church.

Jessica Hariprasad – Ethel Walker

Jessica was involved in many activities including soccer and basketball team, an a cappella group and Beauty and the Beast. “Grace Academy taught me how to prioritize my time with my school work and everything; without that structure, I would be much more unorganized with the work load.” This prioritization clearly helped, as Jess earned a 3.24 GPA. English was her favorite class as students could have “fun discussions and act out scenes from the texts.” Jessica’s new friends include those from China, Africa and New Jersey.

Paola Ocasio – East Catholic

With 600 students, Paola’s first days were “kind of scary” but she says she gained a great level of confidence and comfort over time. Her academic preparation helped with that transition. “Academically, I was on the same level definitely! Grace prepared all of us for what high schools are looking for in terms of communication and respect for others.” Her favorite class was religion and she particularly loved Physical Education because she was able to make lots of friends in that setting. Paola developed two strong friendships at East and performed well at each marking period (earning a cumulative 2.7 GPA); currently, she’s getting help from Grace Academy’s Graduate Support program to prepare for what Paola called “very challenging” mid-term and final exams.

Destiny Padro – Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science

Destiny attends a CREC magnet school ranked 15th in the country and first in Connecticut academically. Her favorite classes are earth science and algebra, because she says, “I love these subjects, the teachers are good, but the subject matter is just very exciting.” Destiny credits Caitlin Clarke and Sulva Bray, two of GA’s teachers when the school opened in 2010, for preparing her for the rigors of this challenging high school. Destiny enjoyed the alumni reception at Grace Academy where she could reconnect with the Grace friends and hopes to do it again this year. She received a 2.7 GPA.

Thi Ri Soe – Northwest Catholic

Thi Ri made the tennis and basketball team this past year which was “a lot of fun” and helped make the high school transition easier. Her favorite class was religion. “The teachers at GA helped prepared me for the level of homework we receive in high school and for teaching us how to handle the work without stressing out. I’ve learned to become a person who wants to learn, who loves to learn and I give a good effort. I’m proud of being a Grace Academy student.” GA still plays a role in Thi Ri’s life. The Graduate Support team has helped her family with applications and other needs. Thi Ri received a cumulative 3.05 GPA.

Kayla Walton – Northwest Catholic

Kayla made the tennis team in her freshman year which proved to be a highlight and help her make new friends. She still stays connected with Grace Academy. In the summer, she volunteered to help with the ConnectiKids program, where she joined GA students on field trips and helped the girls get involved in camp-like activities, teaching them a ‘drill’ (a form of dance). Kayla made the honor roll and finished with a 3.39 GPA.



Board Bio: Jennifer Centrone

Jennifer Centrone is the Vice President of Diversity and Talent at The Hartford. In her role, Jennifer is accountable for the company's internal and external diversity and inclusion strategies, talent acquisition, and talent management.

Jennifer joined The Hartford in 2006 as an HR Director for HIMCO. Her prior roles included Vice President, Organizational Capabilities; Vice President Retirement Plans, Strategic Markets and Wealth Management Sales practices; Vice President, Wealth Management Operations; and Assistant Vice President, Hartford Life Operations, Technology and eBusiness. Prior to joining The Hartford, Jennifer worked at Accenture for 11 years where she spent

five years as a change management consultant before transitioning into HR roles of increasing responsibility. Her final position at Accenture was the HR Business Partner Lead for the North America, Health and Life Sciences business. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English writing and literature from Fairfield University.

Volunteer Profile: Darragh Young



How did you first learn about Grace Academy?

I am lucky enough to be one of Matt Fitzsimons' three sisters. So, I've known about Grace Academy since before it was realized.

How have you helped GA?

This is the thing I always say: I never feel like I do enough and when I do, it doesn't feel like I'm doing anything at all. I have helped mostly with getting the donation technology off the ground, managing the building and editing of the website, and doing the email marketing around the annual Benefit at The Bushnell and Notre Dame-Grace Academy golf outings. And, I helped work on grant applications for a short time in the first years of operation.

What motivates you to serve organizations as a volunteer?

I'm passionate about education. I admire those in the field of education and constantly look for ways to make the lives of students and teachers easier. Helping kids get a great education requires resources. Unfortunately for teachers and administrators, supplies, classroom materials, field trips, and educational events are not inexpensive. Providing funding for private schools is essential to a quality program. Until we figure out other methods to fund schools, they require us – those of us who are more fortunate, have the time, or the access to resources, to step in and help out. Education is really the only place where a donation is not a hand out but really a hand up.

What do you like about GA?

The mission. I have only taken one women's studies class in my life, but that class spoke to the same message as the Grace Academy motto. When you break the cycle of poverty through education you empower young women to change the course of their lives, the lives around them, and their future generations. This little gem of a school in the middle of Hartford could be one of the saving graces for this city. We may be transforming the lives of girls in Hartford, but I bet we'll see that we are keys to the transformation of Hartford too.

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

As I mentioned above, I never feel like I do much, but can help when they ask. It never feels like much. There is so much to do and I believe that the wonderful people who work at Grace are skilled at compartmentalizing the need. So, come and do a little, or do much. Play to your strengths, every moment is an opportunity to be filled with GRACE. Who doesn't need a little of that in their lives?

(Continued from Page 1)

morning academic classes of Math and English Language Arts (ELA). During ELA, students participated in historical fiction book clubs, reading familiar titles such as “The Witch of Blackbird Pond” by Elizabeth George Speare, “Fever 1783” by Laurie Halse Anderson, and “The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle” by Avi. In morning Math classes, students practiced foundational math skills, such as converting decimals into fractions. The rising eighth grade attended a special preparation program for the rigorous SSAT exam, required for each student to gain entry into independent high schools.

Whether honing in on their skills with mathematical graphs, exploring Connecticut’s coastal grasslands and beach habitats, or traveling back in time to learn about the cultural lifestyles of Connecticut people through trips to historic homes, the GA Summer extension program provides a structure of growth and development, along with some fun!



Vilmari, Dayanara, Alanna & Chit Po experience life on a fishing sloop, Mystic Seaport.



Teacher Interview: Colleen Krmpotich

How did you hear about Grace Academy and why did you decide to work here?

Holy Cross Alumni from Covenant Prep first told me about Grace Academy. I chose to work at Grace because, like many others, I fell in love with the model of the school. I knew it was important for me to work in a position where I could work for improvements in social justice. In addition, I wanted to pursue teaching as a career, and I hoped the small environment of Grace would enable me to develop my voice as a teacher.

What have you gained from your experience at Grace Academy so far?

Being from Minnesota, Grace has given me a second home. The relationships that I have developed with students, faculty, and administration have been an important part of my growth at this school and in this state. In addition, Grace Academy has provided me with invaluable experience with teaching and taking leadership positions that new teachers rarely have the opportunity to fulfill at other schools.

What do you enjoy about Grace Academy?

I enjoy the students. Their energy, enthusiasm, and humor make life interesting! I also enjoy the close community that Grace fosters. The sisterhood of the students is extraordinary, and the faculty unity is unrivaled from any other school I have observed.

What motivated you to start a History fair at Grace Academy?

In my middle school, the 8th graders participated in an annual History Fair. My participation in that History Fair was one of the most beneficial projects I have done as a student to date. Not only did it allow me to develop academic skills such as researching, reading, writing, organization, and critical thinking, but it also taught me that I was capable of achieving more than I thought. Feeling immense pride about a project that I had worked on for weeks was powerful. I wanted the girls at Grace to have the same challenging yet transformative experience. As a private school, Grace provided the platform for me to extend beyond normal curriculum that would likely not be possible at a public school. Through the History Fair, students were engaged in constructing history and social issues. In the past two years, the girls have surpassed all of my expectations during the History Fair. Their willingness to push themselves to new limits is inspiring, and their products have been truly remarkable.

You are entering your fourth year at Grace Academy and are earning a Master's at USJ. Can you tell us about your Master's experience, what you've gained and how you have shared your experiences with professors and fellow Master's students?

My experience at USJ thus far has been valuable. With small classes, my peers and I are able to collaborate and reflect upon important issues in education today. Through class discussions and readings, it is evident that Grace Academy and similar schools are having a positive impact on education in America. Though simultaneously teaching and earning a Master's can be difficult at times, I have learned to appreciate it because I am able to implement tools learned at Saint Joe's into my lessons. I am looking forward to a new year at USJ, and continuing to be a lifelong learner.

New Teacher Bios



L to R: Tom, Georgia, Shantel, Julia

Shantel Hanniford is a native of Nantucket, MA, and a Trinity College Graduate with a bachelor's in Psychology and Educational Studies. During her undergraduate years, Shantel played on the Trinity College women's varsity basketball team, and served as captain of the team her senior year. She was also involved in the COMPASS After-School Program at Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy where she served as an intern and a professional youth developer. Shantel teaches 5th grade social studies, 6th grade Girl's Space (health), co-advisor of the 5th grade, and coaches sports during all three seasons. She will also work as an assistant counselor in the Graduate Support Program.

Originally from England, **Tom Manley** attended Wheaton College in Norton, MA where he earned a BA in American studies with a focus on American History and a minor in European History. Tom previously worked as a golf professional where he gained extensive experience with adolescents while facilitating the development of junior golfers. Tom made the transition to education in 2012 and is earning his Master's in Education with a concentration in Educational Technology at the University of Saint Joseph. Tom is the 7th and 8th grade social studies teacher, the 7th grade advisor, the technology teacher and coordinator, the athletic director, and a coach during all three seasons.

Julia Temple comes to Grace Academy from Taylor University in Indiana, where she earned a BS in Math Education in 2009 and a Masters of Environmental Science in 2014. Julia has extensive experience tutoring, working with people with disabilities, and teaching environmental education through Nature's Classroom (Connecticut), Rocky Mountain National Park (Colorado), and The Nature Conservancy (Colorado/Michigan). When she's not planning lessons or grading assignments, Julia may be found hiking, making art, cooking lentils, or writing letters. Julia teaches 6th and 8th grade science, 7th grade math, co-advisor to the 6th grade, and coaches sports during all three seasons.

Georgia Whitaker comes to Grace Academy with a BA from Bowdoin College in Maine. At Bowdoin, she double majored in History and Latin American Studies, and minored in Spanish. Georgia has extensive experience in an international setting. During her junior year of college she studied abroad at the Universidad de Playa Ancha in Chile, where she also interned in the Archival Center of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, a museum commemorating the human rights abuses of Chile's 1973-90 military dictatorship. During one recent summer, Georgia worked as a project supervisor in the Dominican Republic for twelve high-school-age volunteers to plan and implement community service activities. She is from Vashon Island, WA. Georgia is co-advisor to the 6th grade, teaches 7th grade ELA, 6th grade social studies, coaches sports for all three seasons.

Soroptimist International of Farmington Valley – Friend and Supporter Since 2010



At its September 8th meeting, Soroptimist International of Farmington Valley, CT (SIFV) awarded a \$13,000 check to Grace Academy. Soroptimist International, founded in 1921, is a global women's organization whose members work to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. The organization currently consists of approximately 80,000 members in 120 countries and territories throughout the world.

The funds were raised at the Farmington Valley club's March 8th "A Toast to Women – An Evening of Wine and Chocolate Delights" event held at Avon Old Farms Hotel in Avon, CT. "We have partnered with two wonderful organizations whose missions are in line with ours," said Dr. Leora Berns, SIFV president. "Grace Academy is a private, interfaith school that provides a high-quality, tuition-free education to girls from economically disadvantaged Hartford area families. We are thrilled that our club is able to continue to have such a great impact on these organizations that offer so many services to these underserved populations."

At their annual meeting in September, Matt Fitzsimons said to the members, "Over the past four years, members of Soroptimists have helped transform the lives of the girls we serve through engaging activities such as our Cooking Club, martial arts and square dancing workshops, and, more importantly, through role modeling and personal connections that help students actualize who they are called to be."

Save the date for SIFV's next "A Toast to Women – An Evening of Wine and Chocolate Delights," which will be held on Saturday night March 7th, 2015.

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

Dear Friends of Grace Academy,

Grace Academy had a remarkable year including, with your help, meeting ambitious annual giving goals. Your continued support is especially meaningful to us in a city where many non-profits are seeking your assistance to solve diverse needs and challenges. Our school remains tuition-free, so your gifts make possible everything we do.

As Grace Academy matures as a middle school that is also serving its graduates as they move through high school, the Board of Directors made provisions to augment staffing to address the expanded needs. This past year, Grace Academy recruited Linda Noll as school Dean. Linda holds a Master's Degree from Middlebury College, has 30 years of teaching and administrative experience, especially in the areas of admissions and college placement. Heather Hoffman, a volunteer guidance counselor at Grace, was hired to serve as the Graduate Support Director. Heather and Linda Noll work with parents and students on the high school application and enrollment process. Heather also follows, monitors, and advocates for the graduates as they matriculate through high school.

It is the talented faculty and staff who are absorbed in the daily task of patient instruction that results in the life altering work that takes place here. Our little community is also indebted to many volunteers who devote valuable time to: tutor; coach; lead in-school specials on financial literacy, career planning or interview role playing; counsel eighth graders (and drive them to shadow days and interviews); lead Clubs; and most importantly, volunteers share their own personal stories which serve to inspire our girls. Many businesses and individuals donate in-kind gifts of laptops (Bracewell & Giuliani, CSC and McAllister Brothers), library books, backpacks, pianos (2 this year), musical instruments, clothing, color printers and toner cartridges, clothing, cleats and sporting equipment, copy paper, and more. A conservative estimate of \$41,267 was donated in in-kind gifts along with services of \$63,615.

This annual report highlights the growing support we received, which makes possible the development of the whole child, beyond the realm of just academics. Your commitment helps fulfill our mission to serve the underserved population of girls from Hartford. On behalf of the school, we thank you for your support and ask that you keep us in your prayers.

With gratitude,

Wendy Allerton

Wendy Allerton
Chair, Grace Academy Board of Directors

Matt Fitzsimons

Matthew O'N. Fitzsimons
Head of School

Financial Summary July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

Income 2013-2014

Foundations	\$ 97,868
Businesses/Organizations/Corporations	\$ 60,865
Individual Contributions	\$239,958
Special Events (Bushnell/Golf)	\$162,350
Family Fees	\$ 4,772
Parent Council	\$ 3,003
eRate, Interest, Other	\$ 6,984
Government	\$ 0

Total Income **\$575,800**

Federal Title Money	\$ 16,434
In-Kind Gifts	\$ 41,267
Contributed Services	\$ 63,615

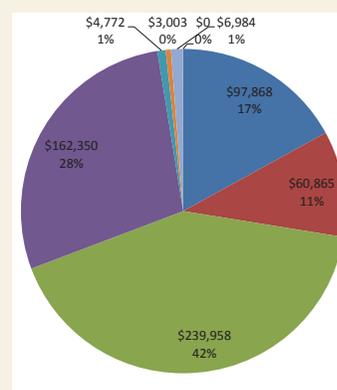
With In-Kind Gifts & Services **\$697,116**

Expenses 2013-2014

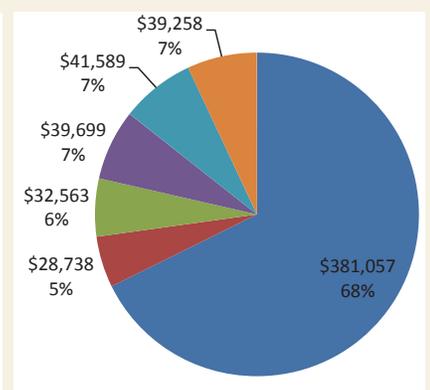
Payroll & Benefits	\$381,057
Development/Admissions	\$ 28,738
Facilities & Maintenance	\$ 32,563
General & Administration	\$ 39,699
Programs	\$ 41,589
Graduate Support Program	\$ 39,258

Total Expenses **\$562,904**

Income 2013-2014



Expenses 2013-2014



■ Businesses/Organizations/Corporations	■ Payroll & Benefits
■ Individual Contributions	■ Development/Admissions
■ Special Events (Bushnell/Golf)	■ Facilities & Maintenance
■ Family Fees	■ General & Administration
■ Parent Council	■ Programs
■ eRate, interest, other	

*These figures reflect the un-audited financial statements of Grace Academy for the one year period of July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

We would like to thank everyone who has shared in the ministry of Grace Academy by supporting the school financially, donating in-kind gifts, and volunteering hours of service in support of our students' education. Every effort has been made to accurately list all Grace Academy contributors and volunteers for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. We apologize for any omissions or errors. Please contact the school 860.263.7535 so we may post the best version on our website.

Donors 2013-2014

Amazing Grace (\$20,000+)

Cherish The Children
George Link Jr. Charitable Trust
The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc.
Ted & Tracy McCourtney
Marjorie E. Morrissey

Full of Grace (\$10,000-\$19,999)

Richard & Kate Duke
Jim Gillespie & Gretchen Wiker
Liam & Lori McGee
McAllister Towing & Transportation Company, Inc.
Mary & Tom McGowan
New Alliance Foundation
The Petit Family Foundation
Tom & Darlene Ryder
Paul & Lynne Vanderslice

Saving Grace (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Aurora Foundation for Women & Girls
Christine Bartus & G. Clarke Finley
John & Colleen Boselli
Maureen Fitzgerald
Ashley & Chip Gengras
Ellen Jeanne Goldfarb Memorial Charitable Trust
Christina & David Lybass
John G. Martin Foundation
Joseph & Celia McKenney

Population Served in 2013-14:

90% qualify for Federal Free/Reduced Lunch

64% raised by a single parent/guardian

94% Retention Rate

100% of graduates placed in private or magnet high schools

Vince & Linda McMahon Family Foundation
Lindsey & Scott McPhee
Jim & Julia O'Brien
Pratt & Whitney
The Reynolds Charitable Foundation, LLC
Marylou Ruch & Tim Frey, MD
Sisters of Mercy Northeast Mercy Ministry Fund
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur St. John's Episcopal Church
The American City Coalition TACC
William & Alice Mortensen Foundation

Abundant Grace (\$2,500-\$4,999)

Rick & Diane Beckerman
Bingham McCutchen LLP
Frank Borges
College Club of Hartford's Mitchell Fund
Patrick & Suzanne DePasquale
Scott & Kim Fanning
Gengras Motor Cars, Inc.
Keith & Natalie Hubert
Shea & John Kinney
Molly Knorr & Mark Drusedum
David & Hannah Lawton
Christian & Jill McCourtney
Morningstar Fund (HFPG)
Wayne & Marilyn McPhee
Ashley & Richard Murphy
Henry E. Niles Foundation
Lindsay Parke
People's United Community Foundation
Elizabeth Policelli
TicketNetwork
Tourneau, Inc.

Bountiful Grace (\$1,000-\$2,499)

David & Hilary Allen
Linda & Charles Andrew
Theresa & Ricardo Anzaldúa
Stephanie Hood & Tom Bacon
Richard Belofsky & Mary Beth Giffune
Kathy & Eddie Binder
Bingham McCutchen LLP

The Bishops' Fund for Children
Gina & Lucien Bolduc
Kathleen Bromage
Eileen & Avery Buell
Nancy & Gregory Butler
The Cheryl Chase & Stuart Bear Family Foundation
Michael & Maureen Considine
Jeff & Jane Digel
Tracy & George Fischer
Matt & Sarah Lahr Fitzsimons
Forensic Accounting Services, LLC
Sandra & Howard Fromson
Clayton & Edie Gengras
Seth Gershman & David Potack
Sonia Caus Gleason
Vivian Lee-Ann & Mitchell R. Harris
Marcia & Guillermo Herrera
Hills Family Foundation
William & Ann Korchak
Kenny Mayne
Max Restaurant Group
Neill & Mary McAllister
William & Kate McCabe
Ted & Mary McCourtney, III
Julie McNeill
Lynda Moecker
Thea Montanez
Matt & Meg Murphy
Adnaan & Gina Muslim
Carolyn & James Norris
Lindsay Parke
Suzanne & Andrew Pinkes
Elizabeth Policelli
Resources Management Corp.
Matt & Julianne Scott
James & Kirsten Shea
Thomas M. Sliney
Tracy Smith
Gail & Joe Stafford
Donna Stout
Nancy & Oswald Street
Tim & Gerri Sullivan
Linda & Will Terry
Thomas & Mary Jean Tisdale
Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC
William & Susan Whelan
Diane Whitney
XL Group

Graceful (\$500-\$999)

Karen & Greg Alcorn
Bouvier, Beckwith & Lennox, Inc.
Frank & Holly Connolly
James & Lisa Considine
JoAnn Corcoran
Joao Delgado
Lawren & Ray DiDonna
William & Nancy Downey
Farmington Bank
Joy Fausey & Peter McHugh
Gail Gottehrer
Griebel Family Fund (HFPG)
Daniel & Karen Head
Heather Hoffman
Chandler Howard
Iris Photography LLC
Liz Isaacs
Lit & Louisa Jones
RJ Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts
Janice Leary, Ph.D.
Luis & Cindy Martinez
Kathy McAfee & Bette McIntire
Brad & Dianne Mead
David Megaw
Virginia Moran
Harrison Niles & Nan Logan
Steven & Jennifer Pelletier
Susan Peters
Robinson & Cole LLP
Rotary Club Simsbury-Granby
The Russel Hall Co
Walter Russell
Shipman and Goodwin LLP
Pat & Sue Settembrino
Michael Thiessen
Patricia & Mark Willis

Thankful Grace (<\$500)

Sean Adcroft
Sharon & Skip Alleman
Wendy & Timothy Allerton
Jeffrey Amell & Mary Martin
Anonymous
Anonymous
Theodore & Alice Ardenski
Gwendolyn Avery
Andrew Baldassarre
Barnabas Foundation
Rita Bartzcak
Sarah Barzee
Eleanor Blake

Nancy Blake
 MaryBeth Bloom
 Lisa & Paul A. Bolduc
 David Bollinger
 Edward & Peggy Bonanno
 Edith Booth
 Thomas & Nancy Booth
 Robert Bourne
 Colin Boyle
 John Bracker
 Kathryn Bradley
 Mary Louise Braney
 James Breen
 Timothy & Deborah Brennan
 Maureen Brown
 Donald & Vivian Bushy
 Kathleen Butler, Ph.D.
 John & Marla Byrnes
 James Calciano & Marcie Schwartz
 Kathleen M. Campanella
 Marco & Michal Carducci
 Carter, Morse & Methias
 David & Lisa Cassenti
 Claire Cates
 Center Church
 Jennifer & Jeffrey Centrone
 Caitlin Champ
 John & Lynn Charette
 The Charles and Dana
 Shimkus Family
 Kristine & Jeffrey Cianflone
 John & Carole Clark
 John & Holly Conroy
 David & Joan Cooney
 Barbara & Carl Corey
 Richard & Jane Costello
 Bryan & Janine Cote
 Frederick Dalton
 M. Frances D'Amico
 Eric & Patricia Daniels
 Felicia De Dominicis and
 Gary Flynn
 Patricia De Vivo
 Denise deFiebre
 Dennis Dell'Accio and
 Janet Valencis
 Joseph & Kristine Delutrie
 Donald Devey
 Elizabeth Donohue
 Carolyn Dorais
 Clare Dowd
 Bruce Edgren & Tamra Lair
 Nick Espisito
 The Ethel Walker School
 Nicole Fanning
 Carol Ficks
 Diana & Will Fiske
 Justine Fitzsimons
 Shannon & Todd Flint

Barbara Flynn
 Catherine & Garrett Flynn
 Meghan Freed & Kristen
 Marcroft
 Stephen & Kari Freudenheim
 Sr. Mary Friel
 J.T. Fucigna
 Robert & Amy Funk
 Liz Furse
 William Furse
 Francis, O'Neil & Del
 Piano LLC
 John & Tracy Gale
 Michael Galluzzo
 Robyn Gengras
 Christine Giamalis
 Arthur & Lynn Giles
 Betty Ann & Paul Grady
 Gloria & H. Richard Grafer
 Joel & Beth Grieco
 Patrice Guiney
 Ronald Gustafson
 Michael J. Haeflich
 Gail Hamblett
 Mark & Kelli-Ann Hermsen
 Law Offices of Andrew J. Hern
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Kingswood Oxford Donates 90 PCs to GA



During the summer of 2015, Kingswood Oxford moved to a tablet based technology program. What then should they do with the 130 PCs in the school? Thanks to some teachers at K.O., they asked us if we could use the PCs. Grace Academy already has MacBooks, iPads and Kindle Fires. But the families we serve need PCs. Matt Fox, Matt Cashman and Owen

Hern (summer helpers) transported 90 PCs to Grace, loaded them with donated Microsoft Office software, and then helped distribute the computers to our families at Orientation Night. Every Grace Academy student now has a working PC in their home thanks to K.O.

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Gifts In-Kind 2013-14

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 The Hartford Financial
 Services Group
 Jackson Lewis, LLP

Notre Dame-Grace Academy

The Notre Dame Club of Greater Hartford hosted its eighth annual golf outing at Tunxis Plantation Country Club on June 23 for the benefit of Grace Academy. The Grace Academy community is grateful to Fred Dalton and the Notre Dame alumni for their years of community service to our school and for organizing this wonderful golf outing.



Lake of Isles
Michael Stasack
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Thankful Grace (<\$500)

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Virtus Investment Partners Provide Backpacks to Students



Grace Academy and Covenant Prep students were surprised with beautiful backpacks to begin the new school year, a gift from Virtus Investment Partners. Lands' End backpacks were donated to the 59 girls at Grace Academy and 50 boys at Covenant Prep containing a variety of school supplies including a Sharp scientific calculator, spiral notebooks, paper, pencils, compasses and rulers. A team of volunteers at Virtus, which is headquartered in Hartford, chose the colorful backpacks, organized the supplies, and packed each backpack, which represented gifts worth more than \$75 for each student. The students at Grace Academy and Covenant Prep's tuition-free private schools were overjoyed with their gifts.

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Grace Academy Undergoing Accreditation Process

As reported in the Fall 2013 edition, Grace Academy has been engaged in a year-long Self Study process in preparation for accreditation. During the 2013-14 school year, everyone connected with the school – students, parents, teachers, staff, Board members, donors – reviewed all aspects of the program. Every constituent group also completed surveys tailored to their connection with GA. All this input/feedback goes into an extensive report which is presented to CAIS. In March of 2015, educators from other schools in Connecticut will visit Grace Academy for 3.5 days to observe and converse with teachers, students, parents, Board members and administrators. The visiting committee will compare their observations with GA's Self Study report. Following their visit, the visiting team will send their report containing comments that let CAIS headquarters know if GA meets the 13 standards that are used to assess schools. Grace Academy will know if it's accredited by the end of this academic year.

Respect Leadership Courage Hospitality Joy Grace

HIMCO Plants Seeds of Service

GA Honors William and Mary Stone



On September 5th, more than a dozen Hartford Investment Management Company (HIMCO) employees volunteered an afternoon of service to work and share their expertise with students at Grace Academy. Under the direction of master gardener, Cynthia Dodd, of Glorious Gardens, a team of HIMCO employees, the seventh graders, and HIMCO President Brion Johnson, toiled under the hot sun to clear weeds, dig holes and plant arborvitae, spirea, and bayberry plants in Grace Academy's new Gratitude Garden, dedicated to William and Mary Stone.

"The Hartford's roots in the city of Hartford run deep and we strive to make a difference in the community," said Elizabeth Ellis of HIMCO, who organized the activities. "Grace Academy's mission to provide exceptional educational opportunities to girls from families of limited economic means is helping to renew our urban environment and we are honored to be able to contribute to such a worthy organization."

In 2009, William and Mary Stone provided the seed money to launch Grace Academy, which opened to 30 inner-city girls from Hartford in August of 2010. The Stones provided a second infusion of funds as Grace Academy matured into a 5th through 8th grade, all-girls middle school, serving students and families who qualify for the Federal Free & Reduced Lunch program. The Gratitude Garden was created to honor the Stone family for their generous philanthropic support.

Displayed outside of Grace Academy's Scholars Room is a plaque honoring the Stone Family and it reads, "They planted the seeds to grow a generation of transformational leaders." The plaque, as well as the Stone Gratitude Garden, is a fitting tribute to William and Mary Stone for their belief in the school, well before it opened its doors. Thanks to the Stone family, GA students will continue to benefit from seasoned educators who bring a combination of joy and a rich intensity to the classroom, motivating our girls to reach toward their hopes and long-term dreams.

The team of HIMCO volunteers modeled service in other ways too! In addition to the gardening team, two other teams of HIMCO executives hosted a financial career seminar and worked with students on an art project.