



THROUGH FAITH AND LEARNING

BLUE & WHITE

SUMMER 2019

What's InSide?

National Honor Society



Reggio Emilia Inspired Learning



Students Abroad



Captured Moments



Farewell Mrs. DiGiacomo



Alumni Spotlight



Principal's Message by Sue Moench, Class of '72

The 2018-19 is quickly winding down and it is time for us to report on another successful year for our school. This year we have embarked on many initiatives which will help guide the school for the future. These initiatives include the Leadership Succession Plan, the Strategic Plan 2018-23, and the school's promotional program "Get to know us at MSA".

Last September began the new leadership transition with the introduction of Mrs. Anna Machado and Mrs. Kim Raymond as the Assistant Principal Designates. With the retirement of Mrs. Margaret DiGiacomo at the end of the school year, a new member has been added to the team, Mr. Chris Tannock. Mr. Tannock has been the high school Social Studies teacher since joining the MSA staff in 2012. He is also an alumnus from the class of 1999. Mrs. Sue Moench will continue as Principal for one more year and will retire at the end of June 2020. During the upcoming school year, the new Principal will be appointed and will assume the head teacher duties when Mrs. Moench retires.

Commencing in January 2019, the Board of Governors along with selected members of the MSA faculty and staff, began the process of developing the Strategic Plan which will guide the school over the next five years. The plan is very robust and has many features which will help to move the school in areas of leadership, professional development, spiritual development, program enhancement, enrollment, marketing, and financial giving initiatives. The Administrative team together with the Board of Governors and members for the MSA school community will be working collaboratively to realize the potential of the plan. We look forward to great things evolving over the next few years.

Many of you may have noticed that our school has increased its presence on social media, radio interviews and advertisements, back of buses, and in the newspaper. The school has been working with RBK Strategic Brand Marketing to enhance our advertising and get the message out about our outstanding school and world-class curriculum. We have learned through research that many in our Bermuda community and past graduates of MSA had little knowledge about our school as it operates today, and it was time to get our message out. Hence the commencement of the marketing program "Get to know us at MSA". The program has been extremely successful, and we are approached daily for school tours and enrollment possibilities.

At the end of this school year, we will say goodbye to our Grade 12 students and staff members who will be moving on to new adventures. We wish the members of the Graduating Class

Continued on page 2.

National Honor Society

Aaryn Cimino

Selection to the Elizabeth Seton Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) is a goal and high point of many students' secondary school careers. With the honor comes the responsibility of maintaining the organization's high standards.

NHS membership is a privilege, not a right. It is based on four criteria: character, scholarship, service, and leadership. Membership is open to students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve. The processes of selection, nomination and induction are governed by the constitution of the society whose requirements, restrictions, and guidelines MSA's chapter must follow. The first test of eligibility is academic: students must have a cumulative average of eighty-five or more.

As a member of the Character Counts Coalition, the NHS mandates the "Six Pillars of Character": respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring and citizenship. In addition, the yearly community service requirement involves actions undertaken which are done for or on behalf of the community without direct financial or material compensation. Service to the school, to the church and to the community are considered. Attitude, dependability, cooperation, willingness, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, and courtesy are all aspects of service.

As an NHS advisor, I am responsible for the direct supervision of the chapter and act as a liaison between faculty, administration, students, and community. Advisors regularly review each member for compliance with

the Society standards and obligations as well as help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties. Membership in the NHS motivates students to reach and maintain their potential as academics. As a result, it enables them to become positively contributing members of their community. NHS members acquire the skills necessary to cooperate effectively within and outside of the society, planning and attending fundraisers to further support several local charities whilst inspiring school spirit at MSA. Through their membership, students achieve great strides in personal growth as they demonstrate leadership both at MSA and in the community of Bermuda through their resourcefulness, initiative, expression of positive attitudes, and dependability.

NHS President, Jehkio Bean-Lightbourne

As I come to the end of my presidency and three years in the Elizabeth Seton Chapter of the National Honors Society, I can appreciate what membership has taught me and the doors NHS has opened for me in the future. My time in the NHS has been an amazing experience. Here I was able to fully comprehend the importance of community service and being an involved citizen of my school and of Bermuda. Being able to watch the new inductees of the past two years grow and strengthen their leadership qualities, has been a great experience for me. We have all grown closer to one another as we strive to maintain our 85% and above averages and continue to serve Bermuda. The

pride in each other's accomplishments that we feel when we wear our navy-blue shirts and pins on a Tuesday is very rewarding.

This society has also taught me many useful skills and traits that I believe will help me in the future. From planning and time management when organizing charity events and school fundraisers, to responsibility and accountability when performing, tracking and submitting our monthly community service sheets, I have benefited from learning to communicate time schedules and advertisements throughout the year, while working in unity as a team with fellow members and the student body.

To all future inductees to the society and anyone who is striving for excellence in the categories of scholarship, leadership service and character, I say to you, give it your full effort. You get what you give. If you put 100% in, you will be able to reap the full benefits in your near and distant future. Have persistence and integrity in all that you do.

I am thankful to have served as the 2018-2019 president and I am honored to have been a part of this society. Thank you to my fellow NHS executive and members for a great year.

Principal's Message Continued

of 2019 the very best of success as they pursue their career goals. We would especially like to acknowledge the following staff members and extend gratitude for their commitment to our students and the MSA family: Mrs. Margaret DiGiacomo who is retiring after teaching and administering at MSA since 1987; Ms. Erika Bove who has been our Spanish teacher for the past 12 years; Ms. Sophia Sontag who has taught Music for the past four years; Ms. Laura Lyons the Director of Development for the past four years; and Mr. Josh Hart who has been our PE and Outdoor Education Teacher for the past three years. We wish each of these valued members the very best of health and happiness.

On behalf of the MSA Family, I wish our faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni all the best for a relaxing summer. We look forward to getting ready for another great year of learning, exploring, creating, and discovering which will begin, all too soon, on Tuesday, September 3!

Reggio Emilia Inspired Learning

Kristina Amaro

Our Reggio Emilia Inspired Early Learning Program creates an innovative active learning environment whereby children, parents, and teachers work together in a spirit of cooperation and as co-constructors of knowledge. The Reggio Emilia approach guides us on our mission to provide a safe and nurturing environment inspiring a lifelong love of learning. The ELP daily schedules are planned to ensure that there is balance between individual, small and large group activities, child-directed and teacher-initiated activities and indoor as well as outdoor experiences. We encourage the children to observe, take things apart, build, discover and explore. We talk with them to find out what they are thinking. We believe the more active children are in their work, the more they learn. As children play, we listen, observe and document. With this documentation, we plan activities and learning experiences that interest the children and meet our curriculum goals.

The Reggio Emilia approach is truly an inspiring approach to early

childhood education which values and nurtures the whole child in all their capacities. We value the child as strong, capable and resilient; rich with wonder and knowledge. We believe that every child brings with them deep curiosity and potential. This interest drives the children to understand their world and their place within it. Children are encouraged to use language to investigate and explore, to reflect on their experiences. Play and self-guided exploration are essential elements of the approach of educating the whole child and understand that each child is unique. In ELP learning and play are not separated. Our program inspires us, as educators, to enhance children's ability to think and learn to allow creativity, confidence, and independence.

One of the most well-known aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach is the belief that children use countless ways to show their understanding and express their thoughts and creativity. Their One Hundred Languages are visible in the ELP classroom with many displays of

artwork, photographs, transcripts of their thoughts, drawings and sculptures, all of which are designed to show the child's learning process. A hundred different ways of thinking, of discovering, and of learning. Through drawing and sculpting, through dance and movement, through painting and pretend play, through modeling and music, each one of these Hundred Languages is valued and nurtured. These languages, or ways of learning, are all a part of the child.



We are excited to share that the Reggio Emilia inspired approach will be fully adopted by MSA's entire elementary program next year.

MSA Students Abroad

Our Administration and Faculty support our students' learning by facilitating attendance at as many learning opportunities outside of the classroom as possible. Locally, students are encouraged to participate in the Spirit of Bermuda, BZS Environmental Youth Conference, and the Endeavour Program, just to name a few. This year, MSA also facilitated two educational opportunities overseas.

During the Easter break, 21 high school students explored New York City on a 5-day arts tour. Highlights included the Metropolitan Museum of Art, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and public sculptures like Wall Street's Charging Bull for the visual artists; a beautiful rendition of "Hallelujah"

by a Central Park performer and tours of the Lincoln Center, Radio City Music Hall for the performers; a choreography lesson through The Lion King on Broadway for the dancers; Ellis Island Immigration Museum, the National September 11th Memorial and Museum for the historians; as well as homemade gelato from Little Italy and some of New York's famous pizza were mentioned by the foodies. The group enjoyed seeing both Wicked and the Lion King on Broadway as well as hitting NYC's major sightseeing attractions.

In mid-June, 4 students attended UOIT in Canada for lectures and field tests in physics, forensic science and nanotechnology! Day 1: Physics

included building sailboats, racing them in a wind chamber, and playing in an augmented reality sandbox. Day 2: Forensic Science included searching for bones and bullets, studying blood trajectory patterns, making molds of shoe prints and hammers. Day 3: Nanotechnology and the sun included making solar cells with blackberry juice, looking at the sun through a filtered telescope and so much more that we heard they had brain overload.

The students (and teachers) enjoyed the experience and some have tough decisions to make because the experience has them rethinking career choices.

CAPTURED MOMENTS

Agricultural Exhibition: ELP claimed ALL of the art prizes in the preschool category (1st place – Catalina Leite; 2nd Place – Austin Hovi, 3rd Place – Nathan Rego, Highly Commended – Cody Harris); Joshua Lloyd and Jocelyn Teuling claimed 3rd Place in their art categories; and Seamus Stone brought home 13 prizes from the Ag Show!



Youth Shadow Cabinet, Minister of Cultural and Social Development – Mia Currin will be attending the Global Young Leaders Conference in Washington DC & NYC this summer.



National Junior Athlete Sponsorship Awards! Joshua Blee – Bda Volleyball Association, Ashley Horseman – Bda Volleyball Association, Liana Medeiros – Bda Triathlon Association, Kayla Raymond – Bda Basketball Association, Christina Stephens – Bda Field Hockey Federation



Outstanding Teens: Conor Sinclair awarded for Academic Achievement & Julia Pimentel awarded for Visual Arts



Class of 2019



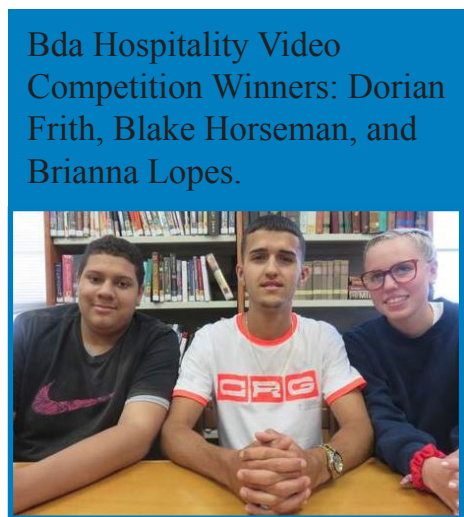
Pembroke Rotary IT Quiz Winners: Maya Leighton, Liam McCue, Justin Stovell, and Andrew Vrieze



Our Alpha Beau: Jehkio Bean-Lightbourne, who placed 1st runner-up in this year's Alpha Beautillion Ceremony and won the Toastmasters' Award.



New Admin Team: With Mrs. DiGiacomo's retirement this year and Mrs. Monech's next year, we congratulate our faculty members who have stepped into new Administrative roles – Mrs. Anna Machado, Mrs. Kim Raymond, and Mr. Chris Tannock.



Bda Hospitality Video Competition Winners: Dorian Frith, Blake Horseman, and Brianna Lopes.



Elementary Spelling Bee:
1. Mattia Casarotti
2. Hailey Furtado
3. Paige Roberts



KPMG Investment Team: 2nd Place – Maya Leighton, Liam McCue, and Andrew Vrieze



100 Days to Graduation: Alumni Support – KeeVon Wade, Tamara Lewis, Jenna Viera, Sierra Petty, Matthew Gerardo, Nikki Thomas, Chelsea Soares, Michelle Dunstan, Karen Marsh, and Colin Rego

Farewell Mrs. DiGiacomo

Margaret (Pacheco) DiGiacomo, affectionately known as Mrs. D., started teaching at MSA in September 1987. This was not her first experience at MSA as she was a graduate of the class of 1973, having attended MSA since grade 1.

Upon graduating from high school, Mrs. D attended St. John's University in New York completing her Bachelor of Science Degree in Education in 1977. She started her teaching career at Elliott School and worked there for 10 years before moving over to MSA. In 1988, Mrs. D. completed her Masters in Education from the University of Maryland. Mrs. D.'s teaching experience was in the elementary grades—mostly in grade 4. In 2007, she became the Assistant Principal working alongside Mrs. Moench.

When asked, what was the most memorable time in her teaching career, Mrs. D. indicated it was when MSA changed curriculum and adopted the Alberta Programs of Study. She always knew that the curriculum that was being taught at MSA needed enhancements and the students needed to be challenged. In 2009, Mrs. D. was part of a team of educators and Board members who went to Alberta to learn about the curriculum. The new program was implemented in September 2009 and the school received full accreditation in 2013.

The road to full implementation of the curriculum was not easy as this change came with some resistance, but the decision was a good one and we needed to stay the course. With lots of hard work on behalf of teachers, parents who realized the greater opportunities being provided for their children, and students being better prepared to experience post-secondary education, we are now offering probably the best educational experience of any school on the Island. Internationally, the Alberta program is seen as one of the best in the World. Mrs. D. is proud of all the



accomplishments and has always been excited to observe the successes. It has been a study in change.

Outside of school, Mrs. D. has always been busy with her family. She is the mother of three grown children and two grandchildren who all live in the USA. Mrs. D also enjoys spending time with her Mother, who is 101 years old.

The people who have inspired Mrs. D. would be her parents. They had a determined work ethic and would never accept second best. They were hard-working people who moved to Bermuda from the Azores to make a better life for themselves and to raise their family. They instilled in their children the values of honesty, integrity, trust, and dependability. Along with a strong work ethic, Mrs. D. also has a strong commitment to her faith, which she gained from her parents. She lives her faith every day in whatever she does. She has been a role model for her children and the lives she has touched over the past several years.

There have been many humorous moments that Mrs. D. can reflect on in her career. The classroom and the many children she has taught over the years have brought her great joy. Life did change for her when she became an administrator. Over the past twelve years, Mrs. D. and Mrs. Moench have experienced many laughs and practical joke playing, there have also been times of sadness when we have experienced losses, but most importantly a wonderful working relationship that has fostered a lifetime friendship. We have never distinguished ourselves as the Principal or Assistant Principal but have referred to ourselves as the Principals of MSA.

Mrs. D. has a great sense of humor and has always been a good sport. Both she and Mrs. Moench have been known to dress up in school uniforms, act in the Christmas concerts, sleep in Victoria Park as part of a homeless project, get up at 4:30 in the morning to make pancakes for the high school shut-in, tease each other about their house colors, ride motorbikes at the bazaar, dress-up for Halloween – to name just a few.

Mrs. D., thank you for your years of service to MSA. You have been a perfect working partner. As an integral member of the administration team for the past 12 years, Mrs. D. has been fair in her deliberations with students, a role model for staff, and a great friend to all who have been privileged to get to know her. We wish you well in your retirement and know you will be missed!



MSA staff taught by Mrs. D.: Chris Tannock, Laura Lyons, Jennifer Chisnall, Lexi Rego, Jennifer Cassidy, Christina Camara, Kristina Amara, Tracy Wicks



Rhona Emmerson retired and moved to the South of France in July of 2018, with her husband J.A. Mark Emmerson, after living, working and raising her three children, Hannah, Gordon and Joshua (also an MSA alumnus, Class of 2002), in Bermuda for 60 + years. As owner and President and Creative Director for Creative Dimensions, AAC Saatchi &

Saatchi, and AAC Bermuda (started in a partnership with fellow classmate Catherine Mahoney), Rhona's professional life was certainly busy and successful, but she also enjoyed supporting the Bermuda plein air painting movement and festival. Painting has been a lifelong hobby for Rhona as well as contributing to her professional career through commercial and retail projects illustrations. Many have shown off her painting talents at the MSA bazaar, where Rhona volunteered as a parent in the face painting stall! We thought our MSA family would enjoy seeing some of Rhona's latest work and to hear about life in France.

Q: What fills your days?

A: Now retired, life has calmed down...somewhat. Mark and I fill our days with gardening, French lessons, and planning to explore this new country and surrounding European countries. A home art studio also allows for happy days painting at home when not out painting around the countryside.

Q: What was/is the biggest challenge about moving and living off-island?

A: The biggest challenge was having the courage to do it. Then came the planning and saving for it - we were very fortunate to have some family "lifelines" to help us with figuring out the logistics of it all and make the French connections. It took us 12 years before making the final leap.

Q: Do you have any advice for those who might be considering living off-island - the thing you wish you knew earlier?

A: My best advice is to do your homework, understand the banking and any tax system that would apply to you and be sure to address any language issues that you might need to adopt, oh why didn't I pay more attention in my French lessons in school!

Q: We imagine your work as an artist, especially a plein air painter, has helped you meet people and motivates you to explore new areas - what advice do you have for our young artists who might be interested in traveling?

A: For me, the plein air movement has been an amazing

way to meet so many talented people in Bermuda and all over the world. Art can be a common language and human connection in a new country or town. You just have to tap into the community, and like any passion grow, be open to connecting, share ideas, ask questions and collect wonderful new friends. When traveling: pack light, always have your sketchbook with you (paint and colors) to record inspirations - your sketchbook is your diary.

Q: What advice would you have for your younger self at the beginning of your creative career?

A: My best advice for creatives in any profession - be passionate, and ask questions. Maintain your curiosity and endeavor to want to know more, learning never stops in the arts. Make short- and long-term goals for yourself that will be flexible as you grow. Also, find a good accountant and build from a strong foundation of cash flow understanding!

- Look back at the past masters and learn from them, history repeats itself... always.
- Look forward to what's new, embrace the change... move with it.
- Be true to yourself and find your own passion... keep moving forward.
- Don't copy! Maintain a solid foundation of honesty and stay true to your core values.
- Seek out and surround yourself with good people, clever thinkers, and supporters.
- Build your own "brand" - this is who you are and how the world sees and judges you, so make it strong and bold.

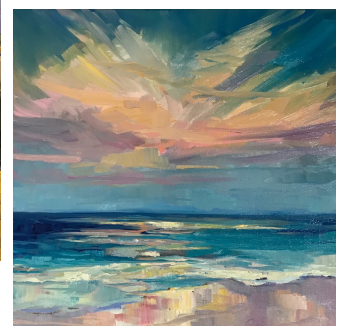
Q: When is your next exhibit and how can we follow your adventures?

A: The next show of my watercolors and inspirations will be in Bermuda, at '&Partners' from mid-July to mid-August. I also have work at Gallery One Seventeen, and the Dockyard Art Center. I will also be participating in my first exhibition in France from July 22nd to August 8th, in the city of Condom: The English Painters of Gers.

www.rhonaemmerson.com

Instagram: [emmersonartist](#)

Facebook: [Rhona J Emmerson](#)





Calendar of Events

- September 3rd: First Day of School
- October 11th & 12th: Bazaar – MSA Cruises the World
- October 21st to 25th: Semester Break
- November 4th: Portuguese Day
- November 11th: Remembrance Day
- December 20th: Half-day, Christmas Break
- January 6th: Return to school



The Blue and White is a Newsletter
published by the Development Office at
Mount Saint Agnes Academy
P.O.Box HM 1004
Hamilton HM DX, Bermuda

Telephone: 441-292-4134 ext.1943
Fax: 441-295-7265
Email: development@msa.bm
www.msa.bm



We are on Facebook, so visit our
Mount Saint Agnes Academy Page
and 'Like' us today!



Twitter: @MSA_Saints