



SEPTEMBER 2015

# The Messenger



The Guardian  
Catholic Schools  
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## Distinguished Scholars

The **Townsend Scholarship** is awarded each year to high-achieving eighth graders and provides them with increased opportunities for mentoring and continued academic achievement. The award is named in honor of Guardian Board Member and past Board Chairman Ron Townsend, whose leadership has been invaluable to the Guardian Schools for over a decade. The 2015 Townsend Scholars are St. Pius graduate **Tyriq Newman** and Holy Rosary graduate **Amaria Simmons**. Newman is continuing his education at The Bolles School and Simmons now attends Episcopal School of Jacksonville.



Tyriq Newman



Amaria Simmons and Sr.  
Dianne Rumschlag

Amaria Simmons was also the 2015 recipient of the **Sisters of Notre Dame Distinguished Graduate Award**. This award recognizes graduates in schools affiliated with the Sisters of Notre Dame National Education Partnership as being outstanding witnesses to Notre Dame education.

Holy Rosary graduate **Destinee Howze** received the **Bishop John J. Snyder Peace in Christ Award**. The accolade was established in 2001 as a way of honoring our now retired Bishop Snyder, who faithfully served the people of the Diocese of St. Augustine from 1979-2000. The award is given to a graduating student who demonstrates the love of God by consistently exhibiting those virtues modeled by Bishop Snyder. The selection is based upon a list of criteria that includes academic achievement, humility, community service, church involvement, and concern for others. Howze plans to continue her education at Bishop Kenny High School.



Destinee Howze

## Congratulations to Our 2015 Graduates

### Holy Rosary Class of 2015

Toni Austin	Laura Medaina
Irie'l Fuller	Taniyah Rouse
Ariyana Hamilton	Amaria Simmons
Destinee Howze	Aja Walker
Audriana Kelly-Grant	Kezia Weston
Willisia Major	Kamauri Whaley

### St. Pius V Class of 2015

Hannah Bonds	Jada Cummings	Kanautica Petty
Candida Brewster	Niga Daniels	E'Lancia Singleton
Monet Cameron	Nickolas Denson	Cody Southerland
Jalen Change	Amari Jones	Santannah White
Kaiyah Christopher	Marquette Merritt	Sheltiana Williams
Sydni Cloyd	Tyriq Newman	

*The mission of the Guardian Catholic Schools is to participate in God's work by providing advocacy, resources and governance to St. Pius V and Holy Rosary Catholic Schools. These resources enable the schools to provide educational and spiritual opportunities to children and families regardless of financial situation or religious preference.*



## A Message from the Executive Director of Advancement

As the new school year begins, I am excited to share the successes of our current students, recent graduates and our spotlighted alum this month. As we recognize the accomplishments of our students and school staff, we appreciate that none of it would have been possible without your generosity and support. Thank you!

This summer, the Guardian opened our St. Pius V campus to Valor Academy for the first ever Jordan Davis Summer Camp for boys. We are excited to share in this opportunity to engage and empower youth to promote positive academic, health, and social outcomes as well as give celebratory voice to the African American male experience, in honor of Jordan Davis.

I am pleased to announce another exciting partnership the Guardian has begun this year with the United Way of Northeast Florida and the Duval Early Learning Coalition. Their *Success by 6* program provides two-year early learning scholarships and year-round school to 3-year-olds at high-quality, accredited schools and childcare centers. The 5-Star rating of our schools' Early Learning programs qualified us to offer these grants to our students and we are grateful for this new opportunity to provide quality education to children from hardworking families who do not qualify for state subsidies. This year we have 11 children and their families participating in this program.

With the new year beginning, I invite you to recommit yourself to sharing in the Guardian's mission to provide a quality Catholic education to all children who desire it, regardless of financial situation or religious background. Thank you for helping change the lives of so many children and families by joining us as "Faithful protectors of children's potential."

Many Blessings,

*Mervin G. Denny*

Mervin G. Denny



## Jordan Davis Summer Camp

In June and July, St. Pius V Catholic School opened its campus to the Valor Academy of Leadership's first annual Jordan Davis Summer Camp. This six week long academic-athletics fusion program for boys in grades 6-10 was named in honor of Jordan Davis, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed at a Jacksonville gas station in 2012. The camp was designed to minimize students' learning achievement gaps and equip them with leadership and entrepreneurial skills. Through hands-on, engaging curricula and field experiences, nearly 50 camp participants studied a wide range of subjects including astronomy, physics, computer programming, anatomy, genetics, and zoology. Through the exploration of film, music, and photography, campers examined the portrayal of the human condition,

particularly stereotypes and sociopolitical issues, across cultures in various media.

"We are sowing good seed into good soil, and of course it's going to thrive, because their lives matter. The lives of these young black men do matter."

-Lucia McBath, mother of Jordan Davis

Lucia McBath, Jordan Davis's mother and the founder of The Walk with Jordan Scholarship Foundation, was present for the award ceremony on the last day of camp, where she addressed the campers. Bath remarked, "The promise that I had for Jordan I see in every one of these young men, and I know that they'll be able to move forward and live the lives and the dreams that I had for Jordan."



Lucia McBath (center), and the winners of the Jordan Davis Award, Leroy Scarver (left) and Darius Holmes.

## Art at the Guardian Schools

Research shows that art education is closely linked to increased problem solving, academic achievement, social and emotional development, and civic engagement. Arts provide students with new outlets for creativity and ways to develop essential critical thinking and collaboration skills. Guardian students visit The Cummer Museum multiple times each school year for tours which include doing an art project. The Cummer Museum also sends art educators to our schools to teach the children art lessons. These tours and lessons allow students to experience the history and diversity of the arts firsthand and encourage them to express their own creativity.



This year the Guardian Schools also hired a fulltime art teacher, Louise Stevens. Louise has spent the past 30 years developing, teaching, and supervising recreational enrichment programs for municipalities across the country. She is thrilled

to transfer this experience to the classroom. "Making art has always been a big part of my life and being able to teach others to express themselves creatively has got to be the best job in the world!" said Stevens. "My favorite artists are the ones I teach, and I look forward to sharing my knowledge and passion for art with them."



Students work on art projects during a visit to the Cummer Museum



## Portrait of Success: Tameka Williams

Dr. Tameka Williams attended Holy Rosary Catholic School for 1st-8th grade, graduating with honors in 2004. She was the recipient of the Sisters of Notre Dame Award and participated in sports throughout her years as a student, including cheerleading, basketball, softball, and soccer. Tameka went on to further her education at Bishop John J. Snyder High School. While there, she played basketball, track, volleyball, and softball, and was a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Honor Society.



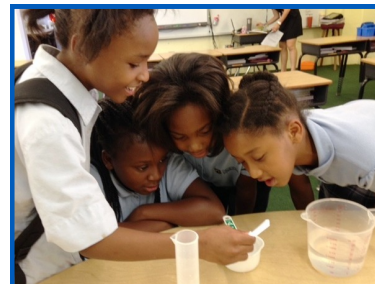
After graduating *summa cum laude* from Bishop Snyder and receiving the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, Tameka enrolled in the pre-pharmacy program at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee. She was accepted into the university's professional pharmacy program in the fall of 2011 and graduated in May 2015 with a Doctorate of Pharmacy degree.

Dr. Williams has always reflected on her formative and character-building years at Holy Rosary Catholic School. She remembers all of the seeds that were planted there, those that helped her understand her own potential and moral compass. Holy Rosary taught her to put God first in everything that she does and instilled in her the values of faith, knowledge, and service to others. It has been a privilege, honor, and blessing for her to have been a student at Holy Rosary Catholic School.

## Hands-On Science Program

"This is exciting. I hope that we do it again tomorrow!" exclaimed Earloni Wade. This third grader at Holy Rosary School was referring to a science investigation that she and her classmates had just completed. In order to meet the needs of students with various learning styles, Guardian Catholic Schools implemented *Science Fusions*, a comprehensive series which integrates a printed work text, e-learning resources including virtual labs, and hands-on science investigations and experiments.

Through engagement, students are challenged to make real life application of scientific concepts and develop critical thinking skills that will prepare them for success in both future



science courses and in the 21st century workplace. When asked about the new science lessons, Jesaily Rodriguez responded, "When I listen to the teacher or look in a book, I learn a little, but when I can see it on the Smartboard or actually do it, I learn a lot more." De'Ante Latimer chimed in, "And it's fun and interesting!"

## New Administrative Changes

As the Guardian Catholic Schools open the new school year, it is my privilege as Executive Director of Education to collaborate with Sister Cynthia Shaffer, the principal of Holy Rosary School, and Mrs. Lauren May, principal of St. Pius V School. Each of these school leaders brings a wealth of experience to their new positions.



Sister Dianne Rumschlag and Sister Cynthia Shaffer

Sister Cynthia Shaffer is an experienced, enthusiastic, and skilled educational leader. Having served at the Guardian Catholic Schools for the past five years as Director of Math Education and last year as principal of St. Pius, Sister Cynthia is well-established in our community. As a Sister of Notre Dame, she values the importance of spiritual leadership in carrying out the school's mission. Her Master's Degree in Special Education has been a tremendous asset in meeting the diverse learning needs of the students enrolled in the Guardian Catholic Schools. Having served on the steering committees for both schools' School Improvement Plans, she brings insight into the schools' overall goals for improvement. Her 32 years as an educator in Catholic schools includes thirteen years in inner city schools and five years in the developing nation of Papua New Guinea.

Lauren May's passion for education is clear in her energetic and insightful leadership. Mrs. May taught kindergarten at St. Pius V Catholic School for 4 years and was involved in the School Improvement Plan

Team, Discipline Team, and Professional Development Committee. She graduated from the University of Florida with a Master of Education degree, specializing in Early Childhood and Special Education, and is currently studying for a Master of Educational Leadership at St. Leo University. Lauren worked at San Jose Catholic School from 2013-2015 as Assistant Principal and Pre-K teacher. As Early Childhood Director, she helped start the first PK-2 class. She was also an integral part of the enrollment and marketing teams, and helped San Jose increase enrollment from 406 to 446 students. Lauren and her husband, Andrew, have a daughter, Madelyn (2 years), and son, Logan (9 weeks).

Gratefully,

*Sister Dianne Rumschlag, S.N.D.*

Sister Dianne Rumschlag, S.N.D.



Lauren May, Principal of St. Pius V Catholic School



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