



San Miguel School
PROVIDENCE

The Class of 2027 with their 5th-grade teacher, Mrs. Maloney, school principal, Mrs. Soltys, and camp counselors, Pablo and Dante, during Readiness Camp at Colt State Park in Bristol, RI.

San Miguel School News

Summer 2023

Full STEAM Ahead

Some things in life are worth the wait. The new San Miguel STEAM Center (shown right) was definitely worth the wait, and the mess, the dust, and the delay of the opening of school. Beautiful, spacious, flexible, and inviting, the new space will house both the Mac lab and our Robotics program. Intentionally open to the corridor through a huge glass window, and located on the same floor as the Science and Arts rooms, the new center will be a place where students and teachers can collaborate, build, innovate, and create.

According to Executive Director, John Wolf, "This new space will be transformational for decades to come by connecting our young men to achievement in the critical skill areas of engineering, computer science, and design. It will provide for our next generation what the first great libraries did for students in the early 20th



century—provide them an incredible opportunity to gain understanding of the world while simultaneously giving them an academic competitive edge."

This magnificent space would not have been possible without the generous support of dozens of individual donors who stepped up to fund the vision behind The Star Campaign. Between the programmatic and staffing changes, the donations to endowment and scholarships, and the amazing infrastructural enhancements like the STEAM Center, the Campaign has launched us on an exciting path that will provide important curricular changes and student support for not only the boys on Branch now, but also for the hundreds who will follow in their footsteps.

We would also like to acknowledge our loyal corporate partners, AMICA, Washington Trust, Citizens Bank, and

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SMS Class of 2027: Brotherhood-Literally

This year's 5th-grade class is more than a little familiar with the school's culture and community, boasting seven siblings and three other family connections. The concept of 'brotherhood' is already alive and well. These boys come with a diversity of talents and interests including reading, math, football, soccer, baseball, video games, and even coding and app development.



The boys gathered well before the start of school for a week of Readiness Camp with Mrs. Maloney, new 6th-grade teacher, Mrs. James, and all-star

volunteer Moses Brown senior, Ian Cooper (shown above with Romeo and Dezmond). There were many highlights to the week including painting and placing kindness rocks in a local park, reading welcome letters from their older

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Students explore the world of VR.

Save the Date! Friday, April 5, 2024
San Miguel's 19th Annual Gala and Miguel Medal Ceremony

SMS Welcomes New Board Leadership



San Miguel welcomed long time mentor and board member, Kim Butler, to the role of Board Chair, effective June 2023. As Managing Director and Senior Trust Officer at Bank of

America, Private Bank in Providence, Kim brings tremendous professional expertise as well as years of institutional knowledge about San Miguel to her role as chair. In addition to her service on the Executive Committee, Kim was instrumental in the development of the school's most recent Strategic Plan, and has mentored four different Miguel Men over the years.

"It is such an honor to be taking on the role of Board Chair and to be working with such a strong and dedicated board and staff. The recent improvements to the building and programs as a result of The Star Campaign and the future plans which emerged in our recent strategic planning

process make it such an exciting time to be taking the reins. There is no mission closer to my heart than the one at San Miguel."



Kim is joined by first time San Miguel board member and experienced educator, Marlon Henry. Marlon spent twelve years at the Gordon School as their Director of Technology before

transitioning recently to Better Days Technology, a local educational technology company. Marlon brings to San Miguel a wealth of experience working with middle school boys and will serve on the Facilities Committee to assist with our tech needs as we launch the new STEAM Center.

San Miguel wishes to thank outgoing Board Chair, Dennis Leamy, for his steadfast leadership through the pandemic and The Star Campaign. We are deeply grateful for his service and commitment to the mission. We also thank out-going board members, Jessica Blanco-Busam, Jamal Burk '02, and Pat Vieira for their time served. All of these individuals have left great legacies at the school.

'Full STEAM Ahead' Continued

Delta Dental of RI, along with our very generous friends at The Champlin Foundation for believing in our vision of excellence in urban education. The new roof and ventilation system along with the fire suppression upgrades make the building safer and enhance livability which will enable us to use the building on a more year-round basis. The STEAM Center will serve as a hub for 21st Century learning and preparation for high school in things like coding, virtual reality, digital presentations, and more. The Br. Charles Kitson, FSC, Student and Family Support Center on the main floor provides multiple meeting spaces for academic support as well as confidential spaces for counseling and meetings with families. We could not be more excited about the possibilities that these changes will provide for the boys.

School Social Worker, Kayla Farrell, meets with a student in our new Support Center.



Summertime Fun!

Thanks to the generosity of a growing group of donors that support our Summer Camp Fund, and the many hours of planning by San Miguel staff, 41 Miguel Men participated in over 120 different camp programs this summer! From overnight sleepaway camps and daylong athletic programs to working with animals at the zoo and farm, the boys had a summer to remember! Here's what some of them had to say...

Ian, Gr. 7: Ice Spice Elite was the name of my team at RIC's summer basketball camp. My favorite part was that I got to form a team with my SMS friends, Zyrell, Isaiah, and Miguel, along with a new friend that we all made, Ethan. We had

so much fun and even won the championship!

Jesse, Gr. 7: I went to Moses Brown for summer camp. I honestly really liked it and I hope to go back next



(l-r): Kai and Amahri.



(l-r): Adrian, Joe'Kari, and Daniel.

year. When I was there I made a few new friends. Some of them were originally from Korea, which I thought was cool, and we are now all good friends.

Noah, Gr. 6: This summer I went to Camp Pemigewasset, an overnight camp in New Hampshire, and my favorite memory was scoring my first soccer goal.

Dante, Gr. 8: I attended Camp Fuller, Rowing Camp, and Zoo Camp. Camp Fuller is in North Kingstown and it's a stayaway camp. They offered a bunch of sports, such as rugby, sail surfing, and much more. It was such a fun experience!

Jarmani, Gr. 6: My favorite moment at camp is when I was able to pet a turtle.

Thank you to all donors, and the many staff members who run these wonderful programs, for helping to make these enriching opportunities available to us.

'Brotherhood-Literally' Continued

San Miguel brothers, and a full day trip to Colt State Park where they collected beach critters, played chess, went swimming, and ate popsicles!

One activity that begins in grade five is Mrs. Maloney's Gratitude Board. Here are some things that our new brothers are grateful for:

I am grateful for friends and family, and for this school.

I am very thankful for my mom.

I wouldn't even be here in the United States if it wasn't for my mom.

I am grateful for my siblings and parents.

I'm also grateful to have a roof on top of my head at home.

Additionally, when the fifth-grade class was asked to write about what they have enjoyed most so far during their time at San Miguel, Kugbeh wrote,

"On my journey to 2027 I am looking forward to an amazing future.

Readiness Camp was amazing. In the last two weeks of school, I've made good friends and there is an amazing faculty and staff here. I can't wait to experience more over the next four years."

New Staff Members Join San Miguel



Meet Our 6th-Grade Teacher, Tanya!

Hello, my name is Tanya James. I'm an experienced educator with a passion for teaching English Language Arts. I've dedicated my career to educating students from kindergarten to 12th grade in a variety of settings, including public schools, private Catholic institutions, and charter schools since 2017. With a global perspective, I spent seven years abroad in Italy, where I taught English as a second language to Italian students. Originally hailing from Rhode Island, I currently reside here with my husband and 12-year-old son, Gabriel. When not in the classroom, I enjoy the tranquility of being by the water, relishing beach outings, and indulging in Marvel movies and TV shows alongside my family. I love spending time with extended family also at special occasions. I'm thrilled to join The San Miguel school community;

I look forward to embarking on a prosperous educational journey together. Be sure to give Tanya a warm welcome!



Meet Our Robotics Teacher, Jeremy!

Hi my name is Jeremy Garcia. I was born and raised right here in Providence, RI. Growing up, I went to the Gordon School for elementary and middle school and then Providence Country Day (PCD) for high school. From there, I chose to get my Bachelor's in Marketing at Bentley University and worked in New York City for four years after I graduated. I returned to Rhode Island in the beginning of 2020 and started working as a Teaching Assistant at the Gordon School. Working with children for the first year and a half inspired me to pursue a career in education. I am currently in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program at Rhode Island College. I'm excited to be part of the San Miguel community and look forward to teaching Robotics to Miguel Men each Wednesday. *And Jeremy, too!*

Partnering with PC

This year we are thrilled to welcome three energetic and talented PC students as year-long interns through Providence College's Community Work Study Program.



Hailing from Boston, Djugui (pronounced "Jiggy") Camara is a junior Accounting Major at PC. A passionate soccer player, Djugui will serve as a Teaching Assistant and hopefully, help coach soccer one afternoon a week.



A graduate of Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft, NJ, John Torres is a freshman majoring in Quantitative Economics and Finance. John will work with the boys in the classroom and join John Wolf in teaching chess.



Sophie Provencal is from Sharon, MA, and will work in a variety of roles including helping in Graduate Support and Development, as well as serving as a Teaching Assistant. Sophie aspires to be a school counselor and is a freshman pursuing her Bachelor's in Social Work.



San Miguel graduates join Mrs. Ellen Collis (middle) and Kim Anderson (left) for this year's annual dinner.

Collis Family Dinner

This year's 'Collis Family Dinner,' one of our school's most beloved traditions, took place on Tuesday, June 27, at Waterman Grille located in Providence. Each summer, any San Miguel graduate who attends La Salle Academy or Saint Raphael Academy is invited by Mrs. Ellen Collis to join her and her family for dinner. This annual event allows the opportunity for members of the Collis family to remain in touch with the graduates that their investment directly supports (and vice versa). This way, there is open communication between the two, allowing graduates to give updates on current academic pursuits and extracurricular interests, as well as express their deep gratitude for the high school aid they are receiving.

"Your kindness and support have not gone unnoticed...Your generosity serves as a constant reminder of the importance of giving back to the community and I am honored to have witnessed and benefited. Your belief in my abilities has boosted my confidence and helped me realize my true potential...I am forever grateful."
- Adrian Mora '19

Similarly, spending time together allows for Miguel Men to discover the Collis' story, and gain an understanding as to why they believe so firmly in the importance of educational opportunity and have chosen to support our school's mission in such an incredible, impactful manner for the last two decades. Thank you, Mrs. Collis and family, for helping us to provide these young men with access to exceptional academic programming beyond our walls.

Those Who Helped to Form Our Foundation

Each fiscal year, San Miguel is blessed with the loyal and generous support of many local foundations. We would like to acknowledge and sincerely express our immense appreciation for the following foundations that have supported our mission for over a decade:

Andrade-Faxon Charities for Children, The Champlin Foundation, The Collis Foundation, Russell Grinnell Memorial Trust, Hazard Family Foundation, John Clarke Trust, June Rockwell Levy Foundation, Kilmartin Charitable Corporation, The Irving H. Levin Fund, McAdams Charitable Foundation, Meehan Foundation, Murray Family Charitable Foundation, Padula Family Foundation, The Picerne Charitable Foundation, The Providence Shelter, Thomas A. Rodgers II Family Foundation, The Edward J. & Virginia M. Routhier Foundation, TriMix Foundation

Thank you all for all that you have done (and in many cases, continue to still do) for the boys and families of San Miguel. We are deeply humbled by your support.

Lobster Bake Dinner

On Friday, August 25, committed benefactors of the San Miguel mission were welcomed to The Agawam Hunt Club for The De La Salle Leadership Society and Founders Legacy Society Dinner. This wonderful event is made possible each year thanks to the incredible thoughtfulness and generosity of Carol Peterson, a longtime friend and devoted donor of the school. Carol's creativity and vision transformed the inside of Agawam into a true, traditional New England Lobster Bake. From a stunning display of a lighthouse and a delicious raw bar spread that included favorite seafood staples to a lively steel drum band, cocktail hour felt like quintessential summertime in RI.



Before the chowder, clam cakes, and steamed lobsters were served, guests joined together to hear from 8th-grade students, Dante and Pablo, about

Boost Your Giving

Don't overlook an important charitable giving tax break—QCDs add a real boost to your donation.

If you are 70 ½ or older and have an IRA from which you need to make a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), there is a special tax break just for you. If you are thinking of a donation to San Miguel, sending that gift directly from your IRA would be a win/win for you and for the school!

When you elect to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) your funds are transferred directly from your IRA to San Miguel. The key difference between an after-tax gift and a QCD is that QCD funds are not included in your taxable federal income.

According to Fidelity Investments: In addition to the benefits of giving to charity, a QCD excludes the amount donated from taxable income, which is unlike regular withdrawals from an IRA. Keeping your taxable income lower may reduce the impact to certain tax credits and deductions, including Social Security and Medicare.



all of the wonderful opportunities they have been exposed to during their time at San Miguel. The speaking portion of this event is always an important moment of the evening, as it highlights the many ways that a person's investment in our mission directly impacts the lives of students. Our community is so grateful that Carol hosts this annual appreciation dinner, as it brings the school's leadership level donors together with those who have included San Miguel in their estate plans, creating a wonderful opportunity to express our collective gratitude.

Thank you, Carol, and all those who were in attendance, for another joyous, memorable evening. Each contribution means so much to all of us here, especially our students and families.



Also, QCDs don't require that you itemize, which due to the recent tax law changes, means you may decide to take advantage of the higher standard deduction, but still use a QCD for charitable giving.

QCDs are limited to the amount that would otherwise be taxed as ordinary income. This excludes non-deductible contributions.

The maximum annual amount that can qualify for a QCD is \$100,000 (Indexed starting in 2024). This applies to the sum of QCDs made to one or more charities in a calendar year.

To learn more about how to give to San Miguel through your IRA or to learn about QCDs, talk with your financial advisor. A Qualified Charitable Distribution needs to be made by December 31 each year before you make any normal distributions.

Our Prayer for Peace

Each year, our school participates in the International Lasallian Days for Peace, which begins on September 21 and is celebrated until October 21. Students were asked to write down a word or phrase that expresses what peace means to them. Each response was then crafted into the following prayer...

Peace is what calms our mind, body, and spirit down—when we're relaxing or sleeping, it can easily be found.

Peace exists when we're alone, and when things are happy at school or at home.

God, we thank You for Your gift of peace, which comes down from heaven to us living beneath.

Our world is blessed when there's no war or violence—when those become replaced with love, joy, and kindness.

Peace is found in hugs and kisses, not amidst chaos, arguments, and disses.

God, help us to open our eyes and work together to address real world problems—so they don't persist forever.

God, help us to make the world a better will want to protect and embrace.

God, thank You for the many things You have given, please continue to bless us with Your love to live in.

Living in peace helps us to be hopeful and strong, and strive towards a reality where we all get along.

Hope for the future is felt when we hear people say, "I feel peace that God woke me up today."

So Heavenly Father, please help us to remember that peace exists when we all respect each other.

Let us never forget Your Golden Rule of treating others how we want to be treated, in both life and school.

Making other people smile does not have a price, which is a great daily reminder and piece of advice.

Living in peace is like a bridge that gets us from place to place, and gives us the strength to live out God's wisdom, love, and grace.

Lord, thank You for giving us another day and chance to express our deep gratitude for this life—we're so humbled and blessed.

Where in the World Are SMS Grads?

This summer, two Miguel Men ventured out into the world, each a deserving recipient of a generous scholarship from the Student Diplomacy Corps, a program that creates opportunities for underserved high school students to “access summer study away programs that build college readiness, deepen empathy and unleash the potential of youth.” **Jose Barrios '20** spent three weeks in Vancouver, Canada, and **Jeremy Alvarez '21** traveled to Japan for four weeks. Below are two excerpts from the essays that each graduate wrote regarding their trip.

Jose Barrios '20 (Vancouver, Canada):

I want to start off by thanking SDC and the San Miguel School for giving me this opportunity of going on the Canada trip. It is an experience that I will never forget and will carry with me throughout my life. I learned so many different skills and did so many things I never would have thought of doing like mountain climbing. I was honestly pretty good at it and I had fun doing it...I also learned how to break wood in half...and even helped some of my friends learn how to swim for the first time and also how to ride a bike. I felt like a proud older brother or as they would say, the dad of the group.



Overall, this summer is really the best summer I ever had in my life. I created friendships that are forever and I know I will be seeing them again soon. I had an amazing time with these beautiful and amazing people that I didn't want it to end.

Jeremy Alvarez '21 traveled to Japan and spent three weeks with a homestay family. Here is an excerpt from his photo journal:

My host mother Merri took this photo on July 17, 2023, at 7:54pm. By this time I was absolutely physically exhausted from the heat all day, and was ready for bed. Right after dinner, I decided to take a look at my homestay



family's map. I noticed they had little red stickers all over the map. I pinpointed where Providence, Rhode Island is and showed it to them. We talked about my city, and about the other students who have been welcomed into their homestay family throughout the years of SDC. I left my sticker on Providence, Rhode Island... The biggest takeaway I brought back with me to the United States was to spend quality time with important people. Especially family, even on a tiring night after a long day of work or school, make time for the people you love.

Additional Graduate Updates:



Our very own **Vernoe Wonmei** (aka “Coach W”) graduated from Johnson and Wales University on May 6, 2023, with a BA in Public Health. Congratulations, Coach W!

Greg Cabrera, who graduated from Rhode Island College in 2020 with a degree in Criminal Justice and Political Science, and then four years later from Roger Williams School of Law in 2022, is now working for Fidelity as a Customer Relations Advocate.

Oscar Castillo graduated in June from Providence College (PC) with a major in Computer Science. He interned with Paypal this summer and is currently working at Citizens Bank.

Fellow PC classmate, **Brian Gomez**, also graduated in May with a degree in Finance, and is putting that degree to work at Capital Wealth Management.



Still at Providence College (and still towering over everyone there), is **Geo Barbosa**, the co-ed base/backspot on PC's outstanding Cheerleading Team. They will compete at Disney World in January. Geo is majoring in Psychology and hopes to pursue a career as a therapist for veterans.

Speaking of PC athletics, current 8th grader, **Emmanuel**, was one of several



San Miguel students who attended the Kim English basketball camp this summer. While there, Emmanuel earned the “Mr. Hustle” award.

Next time you order pizza, it may be delivered to your house by a robot designed by **Brian Guevara '15**.

Guevara, who graduated from Roger Williams University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in May, designed a pizza delivery robot for his capstone project. Guevara has left pizza behind and now works for Electric Boat as a Systems Engineer.



While on the subject of food, this summer, Plant City was San Miguel South as four graduates joined Kim Anderson's incredible team. **Jeremy**

Alvarez '21, Felix Franco '22, Joe Franco '18, and Yancarlos Gonzalez '22 worked hard and gained valuable, hands-on experience. Thank you for giving them this wonderful opportunity, Kim!



Brian Betances '15, a deserving recipient of a scholarship opportunity provided by a longtime San Miguel board member, graduated from St. John's

University (SJU) with a degree in Marketing. He met up with fellow SMS graduate, **Marcos Perdomo '16**, who attends Fisher College in Boston at the National College Egaming Tournament event in Texas.

If you are looking to hire a talented SMS grad, or are aware of any open positions, please contact Graduate Support Director, Johnny Kue, at jkue@sanmiguelprov.org.

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This newsletter is published by the Office of Development.

For more information, please contact Mel Bride, Director of Advancement and Strategic Partnerships, at 401-467-9777 x117.

This San Miguel School News issue is made in memory of two remarkable individuals, Aiden Alejandro, SMS '22, and Br. Michael Reis, FSC, whom we love and miss dearly.

Aiden Alejandro, 2008-2023



Born in Warwick, he was the beloved son of Jonathan and Lauren (McCann) Alejandro. He was a former student of the San Miguel School and a current student of School One.

He was the loving brother of Serenity Alejandro; cherished grandson of Migdalia Acevedo; adored nephew of Emily and JC Casanova; and friend of many.

He loved to play video games and read manga. He had great taste in food! Oysters, salmon, caviar, he wanted to try it all. Aiden loved to garden; he nurtured the plants at San Miguel to the best of his ability and the garden continues to thrive. He also wanted to try everything! Cooking, crew, tennis, chess, the theater, ceramics, and so much more. He was funny and sarcastic and wanted to know everything and share what he learned. Aiden had a bright spirit that will be deeply missed.

Br. Michael Reis, FSC, 1942-2023



Born William Charles Reis in Queens, NY on July 31, 1942, Br. Michael passed on September 24, 2023 at the age of 81. Br. Michael Reis, FSC, a De La Salle Christian Brother, founded a fellow Lasallian

organization, Tides Family Services, in the early 80s to help address needs of at-risk children in RI.

Brother entered the Narragansett RI Novitiate on June 29, 1960, received the Religious Habit and Name Michael Ignatius on September 7, 1960, and pronounced Perpetual Vows in Barrytown, NY on August 2, 1968.

Br. Michael was a visionary with a deep passion and purpose to help to serve the poor, a missionary within our borders. He will be deeply missed and always remembered in our school community.

Miguel Moments



Class of 2023

On June 12, another class of Miguel Men became part of our over-400 alumni base, and are currently starting their first year of high school off strong.



Mt. Hope Farm

History came alive recently when 5th and 6th graders gathered at Metacomet's Seat located at Mt. Hope Farm in Bristol to hear from members of the Pokanoket Tribe about the role their ancestors played in the Indigenous and Colonial history of our region. The boys also got to spend time with the farm animals and enjoy lunch on the banks of Mt. Hope Bay. We would like to thank Kelly Lambrese and Carol Peterson for providing this incredible experience for our students.



Tee-Off for Education

Our 15th Annual Golf Tournament took place on Friday, September 22, at Triggs Memorial Golf Course. This year's tournament grossed over 46k in support of our Student Sponsorship Program. We sincerely thank all sponsors, players, and donors, as well as our Golf Planning Committee and the staff members at Triggs for helping to make this year's outing such a wonderful success. A special thanks goes to Corporate Team Sponsors: Amica Mutual Insurance, Arden Engineering Constructors, Delta Dental of Rhode Island, The Papitto Foundation, Strategic Retirement Partners, and Weybosset Research & Management for the vital role each played in making our 15th Annual Golf Tournament a major event. We could not have done it without any of you!

Mark Your Calendar!

October 13 - Fall Handshake Event
December 8 - Winter Awards Luncheon
January 19 - Winter Handshake Event

April 5 - 19th Annual Gala and Miguel Medal Ceremony

May 10 - Spring Handshake Event

May 17 - Spring Awards Luncheon

June 10 - Graduation



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