



**San Miguel School**  
PROVIDENCE

As we celebrate National Mentoring Month in January, we would like to thank all of our remarkable mentors, each of whom make a significant difference in their mentee's life.

**San Miguel School News**

**Winter 2023**

## The Infinity Cookie Company Caper

What do you get when you combine a generous grant from Citizens Bank, some really smart Brown University graduate students, a forensic pathologist, and the creativity of a middle school science teacher? You got it! A break in at a cookie company and the resulting crime that needs to be solved!

"Science is everywhere! My goal is always to expose the students to as many interesting aspects of science as I can in hopes that they will appreciate both the mysteries of science as well as the broad range of career paths that science provides," said science teacher, Arthur Santoro. Mr. Santoro, a self-proclaimed science nerd, knows that



Anderson, Gr. 8.

middle schoolers love hands-on learning, and so he tapped into a generous grant from Citizens Bank to buy an array of new lab equipment and materials including microscopes, slides, beakers, and new textbooks.

Students then began this crime unit with a study of the human cell, fingerprints, and fibers. This eventually led to an exploration of forensics and DNA. At that point, he brought in a group of graduate students from Brown University, as well as forensic pathologist, Dr. Lance Truong (shown left), to talk about and do science with his students. Under the guidance of the Brown volunteers, students executed a lab on the technique of gel electrophoresis, where students took samples of DNA and placed them in the wells of an agarose gel (shown above). **Continued Inside Top Left**

## San Miguel's First-Ever Media Team

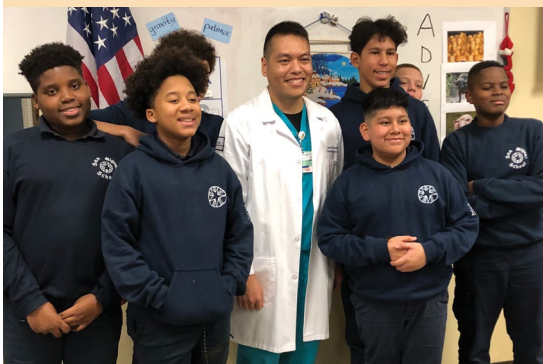
This school year, the first-ever SMS Media Team was formed. With support and guidance from Dean of Students, Taysha Paulo, the 7th-grade class, along with one sixth grader, have taken on the task of reporting school-wide updates each morning.



The team is led by 7th-grade student, Emile (shown left), who makes sure that everyone's ready to go live each school day. He states, "I'm so glad to be part of the Media Team— it's a wonderful

group. I always look forward to every morning when we do our live stream. We get to report on a variety of things, and also show our bubbly personalities. Overall, it's very fun and exciting!"

The Media Team is a group effort— everyone has a job to do. Emile begins each day by greeting our community, then passes things off to weatherman, Edwin, to report on the day's conditions. **Continued Inside Bottom Left**

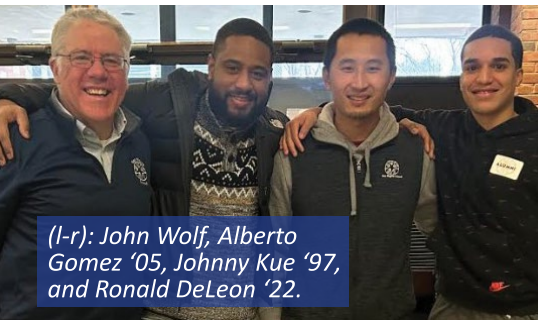


**Save the Date! Thursday, April 27, 2023**  
**San Miguel's 30th Anniversary Celebration at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet!**

# Great Things Are Happening in Grad Support

Part of the San Miguel School mission statement reads, “We walk with our students and their families throughout their educational journey at San Miguel and beyond.” Well, just walk into the Graduate Support office any time of day (or night or weekend!) and you will witness that mission in action.

Graduate Support Director, Johnny Kue '97, may be meeting with a family about the best high school matches for their 8th-grade son; Assistant Graduate Support Director, Jacquelin Saavedra, might be sitting with an SMS graduate who took two years off after high school to work and now wants to pursue a college degree.



(l-r): John Wolf, Alberto Gomez '05, Johnny Kue '97, and Ronald DeLeon '22.

## Grad Updates

SMS Class of '19 members, **Jamezell Lassiter**, **Ja'kai Washington**, **AJ Tavarez**, **Adrian Mora**, and **Edinson Perez**, along with **Herlin Perry** and **Andres Gibbs '21**, all played on La Salle's varsity football team, winning the 2022 Rhode Island State Championship (D1). **Jamezell Lassiter '19**, was also awarded the La Salle Student Athlete Award in October.

Speaking of football, senior athlete, **Ronald Soto '19**, played for the St. Ray's varsity football team that won the 2022 Rhode Island State Championship (D2).

**Jackson McWilliams '19**, also a senior at St. Ray's, is being inducted into the Music Honors Society.

La Salle wins RI State Championship (D1).



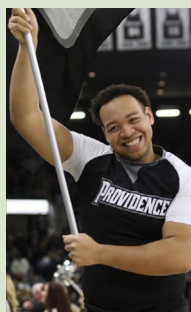
The Grad Support office is a busy place where students, graduates, and families know they are in a safe space where they can find expertise and guidance from trusted and committed people like Johnny and Jacquelin. That expertise includes high school and college application assistance, FASFA and financial aid support, bilingual assistance for families who are navigating the college process for the first time, professional networking advice, or even just an ear of a trusted adult at a time of personal challenge.

*To learn more about San Miguel's Graduate Support Program check out this video: [youtu.be/VeoWnyKtLM4](https://youtu.be/VeoWnyKtLM4)*

### Eighth graders are applying to:

La Salle Academy, St. Raphael Academy, Providence Country Day School, Classical High School, Moses Brown School, Wheeler School, The Met, Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Davies Career and Technical High School, Bishop Hendricken, and Milton Hershey School.

College freshman, **Joe Franco '18**, is all in at URI, joining the Brothers On a New Direction (BOND) community service organization, while also serving as the equipment manager for the university's football team.



In addition to being an official Friar Fanatic, Providence College sophomore, **Geo Barbosa '17** (shown left), was asked to serve as a student representative for new members of the college's board of trustees.

**Felix Gotay '15** is currently enrolled in the RI Police Academy and **Ivan Uceta '15** is serving in the National Guard Reserve.

**Alberto Gomez '05** (shown above) is pursuing a PhD in Clinical Psychology in California and visited us in January.

**Ryan Dacruz '02** and his wife Nacelyn recently became owners of The Point Tavern on Wickenden Street. Grab some friends and head on over!

Last fall, **Berto De La Rosa '13** became

**High school seniors are applying to:** St. John's University, Manhattan College, UMass, Emmanuel College, Assumption University, Sacred Heart University, Dean College, Stonehill College, Bentley University, Berklee College of Music, CCRI, URI, Providence College, Rhode Island College, and Johnson and Wales.

### And for those who are not pursuing college right away, Grad Support has learned about and connected alum with the following programs:

Job Corps, Year Up, Youth Build, Building Futures, and the Bank of America internships program.

### Open Gym Tuesdays have sold out!

Attendance is so great that Johnny has decided to divide the time into two slots, one for younger grads and one for older. And the new placement of the office (adjacent to the gym) has created opportunities for grads to connect with Johnny and Jacquelin, receive academic and college application support, as well as bond and connect with classmates over video games and pool.



the proud dad of Romeo De La Rosa and is juggling parenthood with his work as one of our assistant teachers. Will Romeo be a future Miguel Man?

Shown above (l-r) are St. Ray's students, **Jayden Cardoso '19**, **Felix Franco '22**, **Niyurukundo Christian '21**, **Reynaldo Soto '21**, and **Niyontsinzi White '19**, along with PCD student, **Yancarlos Gonzalez '22**, reuniting on the court—a spot that's most familiar to them all.

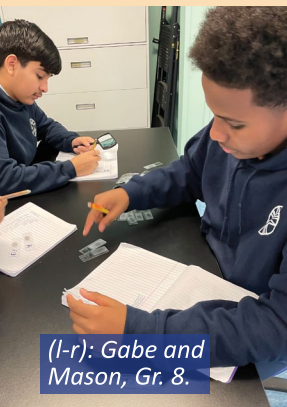
Assistant teacher and head basketball coach, **Vernoe Wonmei '14**, has big shoes to fill as Mrs. Paulo stepped aside this year as the San Miguel A team basketball coach. Coach W. has picked up right where Mrs. Paulo left off—coaching up great talent and outstanding sportsmanship.



Crime scene photo taken at The Infinity Cookie Company.

### Continued from Front Left

You would not be wrong to think, “this seems like pretty sophisticated stuff for middle school students!” It sure is—but Mr. Santoro doesn’t want to waste any opportunity to get kids excited about science or thinking about their futures. Excited they were



(l-r): Gabe and Mason, Gr. 8.

when they returned from Christmas break to find a crime scene in their classroom! All the aliens, even alien Barbie and alien Ken, had been tied up, and all the cookies

from The Infinity Cookie Company had been stolen. But for these students-turned-forensic-scientists, what looked like a mess was a gold mine of clues.

Students went right to work, first making visual observations of the scene and documenting those with sketches and in writing. Then they began to run tests on clues found at the scene—fibers, fingerprints, and shoe prints. The students will now gather their clues, and begin to build their case based on scientific evidence, against the person or people in the San Miguel community who they think committed this horrific crime.

Thanks to Citizens Bank, Dr. Truong, and the Brown graduate students, Mr. Santoro has been able to bring DNA and forensics alive within his classroom through a classic ‘Whodunnit?’



Justin, Gr. 8.

### Continued from Front Right

Jon and Rafael follow with ‘Sports Reports,’ covering recent scores and stats, before handing things off to Pablo who regularly interviews a variety of both staff and students. They then jumps in with a fascinating daily fun fact, while Remington and Emmanuel take turns delivering the joke of the day—the most recent being, “Why did the egg crack up?...Because he was told a yolk!”

Most recently, 6th-grade student, Mikey, has been a fun addition to the team, adding weekly trivia into the mix, which has really engaged our viewers! Similarly, folks know to tune in at the end of the week for ‘Friday Advice with Franky V.’ After everyone has had a chance to report out, David tends to wrap up the show with morning announcements. But before everyone begins their day, Emile hops on one last time to close out the show with a Lasallian prayer. The screen then cuts to the Media Team (shown right) signing off and waving goodbye!

For all the preparation that is witnessed on screen, there is an equal amount of effort taking place behind the scenes. Jayden and Nathen wait on standby, ready to fill-in if there’s ever an absence. Andrew creates the media design (including a very cool opening visual), while Rosmany smoothly runs all audio. Members of the team also take turns attending athletic events to document each game. The captured footage is then handed over to video technician, Dante, who then pieces it all together.

As they say, “many hands make light work”—but these hands, working together, make a light that blesses our community each and every day.



(l-r): Mel Bride, Johnny Kue '97, and Tali O'Leary

## Miguel Men Leave A Mark

By: Tali O'Leary, URI '23

This fall I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to join the San Miguel School community as an Admissions and Enrollment Intern. Most of my internship consisted of helping to create digital information systems for tracking applicants and graduates. Additionally, I built communication strategies for outreach to alumni and prospective applicants. However, the best part of my internship was building relationships and serving as a role model for the boys in the school.

This could be when some of the boys would come into the office to play pool, playing ‘knockout’ with the 5th and 8th graders at recess, or when students would approach me for advice about prospective high schools and colleges they were looking at. While I am still searching for my first win in ‘knockout,’ I am grateful to have been welcomed into the San Miguel community with open arms for the six months I spent there. The energy these Miguel Men brought every day, regardless of all the other challenges they may have been facing, was inspiring and gratifying. They taught and reminded me to take time each day to slow down, interact with others, and enjoy the present.

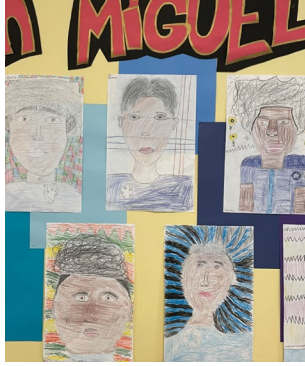
Working with San Miguel students was a privilege and I’m grateful for the time I got to spend within their community. It was clear to me when I first visited the school that each Miguel Man carried himself with pride. It was evident they were proud not only to be a part of the San Miguel community but eager to be contributing members to it by bettering themselves and their classmates around them. I hope that I left a mark on them just like they have left a mark on me.

## Star Campaign Impact

The Star Campaign continues to bring exciting changes to Branch Ave. Last summer, we moved the Graduate Support office downstairs next to the gym (shown below), which has created a highly used space for the Graduate Support team to work with alumni and families, as well as run events like Open Gym on Tuesdays. The old Graduate Support office then became the new science classroom boasting new lab equipment, brand new textbooks, and plenty of space for ongoing projects like Mr. Santoro's crime scene. Moving science to its



own room meant that art would finally have its own room as well, providing additional space for projects and improved exhibition of student work (above are self-portraits).



This summer we will tackle the biggest project of all—converting the current library (see related article below) into a Technology and Robotics space. The co-location then of tech, robotics, science, and art on the third floor makes that level an incredible place, full of activity, inspiration, and learning. In addition to being great spaces for student learning, teachers will also have the opportunity to collaborate and develop engaging interdisciplinary curricula. These changes have no doubt created both efficiencies and opportunities, and would never have been possible without the support of donors to The Star Campaign.

## Swim Class is A Splash!

Thanks to the Cranston YMCA and the Papitto Opportunity Connection-funded Gift of Swim Program, San Miguel's fifth graders were the lucky beneficiaries of an eight week swim program that included water safety, skill development, and lots of splashing fun!



Gianni, Gr. 5.

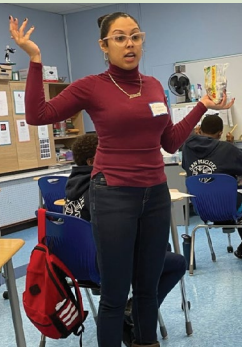
*If you'd like to sponsor a family membership so that one of these new water bugs and his family can continue to enjoy the YMCA, please reach out to Mel Bride, Director of Development, at 401-222-0215.*



5th-grade students at swim.

## FLY Initiative

This fall, SMS launched a partnership with the Financial Literacy Youth Initiative (FLY). Founder, Marcy Reyes, visited the school last March where we began a conversation about her organization which serves middle and high school students through culturally responsive, hands-on classes on ten financial literacy topics. Her interactive program uses real life examples that our boys could relate to. "I think a lot of what I learned I can apply to when I need to save for college or start my own business," said 8th-grader, Mason. FLY teacher Alexandra Castillo (below) thoroughly enjoyed her time with our students. "The students were always eager to learn about our program units



like: the psychology of money, checking and savings, budgeting and investing, and developing a financial plan," she explained.

*To learn more about FLY, visit their website: [flyinitiative.org/home](http://flyinitiative.org/home)*



## Grateful for Giving

The generous support received through our Giving Tuesday campaign has made for some very happy (and grateful) teachers around here. Thanks to our donors, we were able to raise over \$4k towards much needed teacher supplies. Mrs. Mahoney (shown above) has been able to purchase new corkboards to display student art, while Mrs. Maloney (shown right) is simply thrilled to have a new paper cutter and laminator in the staff lounge! All of us here sincerely thank the many contributors of this incredible success!



## New Library Space

Longtime San Miguel Art teacher, Eloise Mahoney (shown left), spent much of the fall "channeling her inner librarian" as she inventoried our entire collection in preparation for moving prioritized books to their new home—the Branch Avenue foyer. As the upstairs library prepares for its exciting Campaign-supported transition to the new Tech/Robotics Lab (see above article), reading will take center stage in a highly trafficked area between the gym and the cafeteria. Eloise has seen much more book movement since the relocation. She's also seen great student interest, particularly in multicultural fiction, and would like to grow the number of books in that collection.

*If you are interested in helping us with this need, please reach out to Eloise at [emahoney@sanmiguelprov.org](mailto:emahoney@sanmiguelprov.org)*

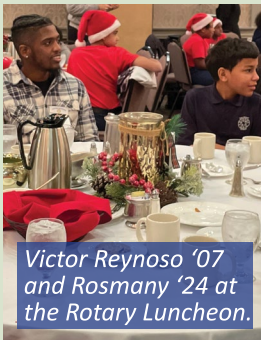
We would like to thank Eloise for this incredible labor of love, and also express our deep appreciation to SMS maintenance manager, Chute Am, and St. Sebastian's parent volunteer, Jen Tarro Walsh, who both helped make this a reality. Let the reading begin!

# A Happy Holiday

As always, we are deeply grateful for the immense support that we have received this holiday season. Each year, we are blessed by many avenues that directly support students and families.

Great appreciation goes out to all of our mentors, donors, and friends, as well as community partners, such as La Salle Academy, the Greenville Churches, St. Sebastian's School, and St. Sebastian's Church, who participated in our annual Holiday Giving Program. Their generous support of the Thanksgiving Basket Drive and Embrace-A-Family Program, ensured students warm food on Thanksgiving, as well as gifts to open on Christmas.

Speaking of community partners, Providence College continued to add to our students' joy during this season through their Giving Tree program. Members of the college took great fundraising



Victor Reynoso '07 and Rosmany '24 at the Rotary Luncheon.



8th-grade students with Berto De La Rosa '13.

initiative, and as a result of their efforts, provided each of our students with gifts! On another joyous note, we were able to once again join the Providence Rotary Club for an afternoon luncheon. Not having been able to participate in this beloved tradition for the last two years made for a truly happy occasion as students and staff reunited with club members over a hot lunch, wonderful conversation, a student poetry performance, and gifts from Santa, too! *Thank you to all those who helped make this season merry and bright!*



Student poetry performance.

# Agents of Change

"They are the perfect age. They are discovering that the world is bigger than just their neighborhood, and they still have flexible thinking," said Roger Williams Park Zoo's School Program Specialist, Meg Archer, of students in the 7th grade. This year, San Miguel is partnering with the Zoo as part of its Environmental Justice Academy. Funded by a United Way Community Impact Grant, the program aims to teach youth that zoos are about more than just animals by providing two educators who partner with teachers and lead weekly discussions with the students. Topics range from environmental justice and conservation, to food deserts and health care access. They have also discussed issues related

to housing in urban areas, as well as what it means to be active in your community. Meg has been joined by independent contractor, AJ Burton, from Connecting for Children and Families. Both Meg and AJ (bottom left with Remington) are walking the walk of what they teach by both becoming mentors in our Adult Mentor program. "I've never felt more welcomed by a community than I have here," said Archer.

Students in the class have enjoyed learning about topics that they really had no previous knowledge of and have begun to think about putting their learning into action. Their homeroom teacher, David Cormier, elaborates, "The students are beginning to think about ways that they can impact their own environment, which is something few youths ever consider. They will choose their own issue to address, which is powerful in itself, and the Roger Williams Zoo staff will guide them through the process of determining how they can make their world a better place. This is a great way to teach our youth that they are more than just passive learners—they can be agents of change!"



# Annual Awards Lunch

On December 2nd, after a three-year hiatus, the San Miguel community came together once again for our Winter Awards Luncheon. Faculty and staff, joined by families, mentors, and sponsors, gathered in the gymnasium to celebrate student achievements.



The ceremony was led by 7th-grader, David (shown left), whose joyful spirit brought great energy to the day, moving the program along with such ease and confidence.

During the event, each student received an award (or awards) for a variety of categories—all designed to highlight academic and/or behavioral excellence. It was a happy and proud moment for all.

At the luncheon, we also recognized the Brown/NBC STEM to Stern program as an outstanding community partner. Brown/NBC STEM to Stern is a joint program of Brown University and the Narragansett Boat Club that brings STEM education and rowing instruction to Providence middle school students. Miguel Men have been the beneficiaries of this program for the past two years!

"In addition to providing the opportunity to exercise while appreciating the natural resources around them, STEM to Stern increases the students' ability to think critically and problem-solve both on and off the water," said John Wolf, our Executive Director. "We appreciate all the people who are involved in bringing the program to our students."

John Wolf is shown below (far right), along with students Dante and Pablo, who are presenting an award to Brown University graduate student, Payton De La Cruz, and NBC coach, Rick Richards.





**Dennis Leamy Jr.**  
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**Jessica Blanco-Busam**  
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Member-at-Large

**Scott Stevenson**  
Executive Committee  
Member-at-Large

**Jamie Worrell**  
Executive Committee  
Member-at-Large

**Jamal Burk, SMS '02**

**Joel Del Rosario, SMS '99**  
**Br. Joseph D. Macioce, FSC**

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**Robert McMahon**

**Michael Nerbonne**

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**Christine Rogers**

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**Katie Spatcher**

**Mitchell Tiah, SMS '07**

**Patricia Vieira**

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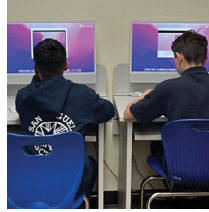
*This newsletter is published by the Office of Development.*

*For more information, please contact Mel Bride, Director of Development, at 401-467-9777 x117.*

# Miguel Moments

## New iMacs in Technology

Thanks to an incredible gift from a very generous donor, our technology room has been provided with 17 new iMacs for students to learn on.



## USS Constitution Field Trip

On November 2, the seventh grade class went to Boston to visit the USS Constitution Museum and climb aboard Old Ironsides. Thanks to the generosity of longtime friends and donors, Pat and John Biasuzzi, students were able to learn what ship life was like in the 1800s.



## A Lasallian Youth Initiative

This advent, Lasallian Youth members organized a school-wide fundraiser in support of Heifer International. Students, staff, and Awards Luncheon attendees donated a total of \$710, allowing us to purchase a water buffalo, a sheep, two goats, and five flocks of chicken for those in need.



## Christmas Luncheon at Fresco

On December 13, Jack Walrond, owner of Fresco Restaurants, kindly invited the entire school to a Christmas luncheon at his Cranston location!



# Ways to Give

## Are you looking for alternative ways to support San Miguel financially?

- You can see if your employer matches charitable donations and designate the school as the beneficiary of their match
- You can gift appreciated stocks to the school (gifting us the securities instead of the cash allows you not to have to pay taxes on it)
- You can name San Miguel as a beneficiary in your will or trust

• You can direct your RMD (required minimum distribution) from your IRA to San Miguel  
Every gift, yes, every gift, strengthens the foundation on which the school stands and enables us to envision financial sustainability for years to come.

*For more information, or to talk about how you would like to leave your permanent mark on the school, please call Mel Bride, Director of Development, at 401-222-0215 or by email at [mbride@sanmiguelprov.org](mailto:mbride@sanmiguelprov.org).*

# School Events

## Annual Golf Tournament

Our 14th Annual Golf Tournament took place on Monday, October 3rd, at Triggs Memorial Golf Course located in Providence. This year's tournament raised \$40k in support of our Student Sponsorship Program. We sincerely thank all sponsors, players, donors, and our Golf Planning Committee for making it a major event. A special thanks goes to event sponsors: Amica Mutual Insurance, Arden Engineering Constructors, Delta Dental of Rhode Island, Papitto Foundation, Strategic Retirement Partners, Washington Trust Co., Webster Bank, and Weybosset Research & Management for the critical role they played in making our tournament such a huge success.

**We could not have done it without you!**

# Save the Date!

## San Miguel School's 30th Anniversary Celebration

Please be sure to mark your calendars for our **30th Anniversary Celebration** **Thursday, April 27, 2023** from 5:30-9PM at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet!

### Event elements will include:

- Complimentary Cocktails & Signature Hors d'oeuvres*
- Seated Dinner by Blackstone Caterers*
- Student Performances*
- Miguel Medal Ceremony*
- Distinguished Alumni Award*
- 30 Years of Impact Video*
- Silent Auction and Raffle*

**Join us in celebrating 30 years of San Miguel friends, students, graduates, and families!**