



*Sponsored Ministries of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston*

# The Bridge

BETHANY HEALTH CARE CENTER + BETHANY HILL PLACE + FONTBONNE ACADEMY  
JACKSON SCHOOL + REGIS COLLEGE + SAINT JOSEPH PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL + WALNUT PARK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

## SJP Seniors Serve Their Community

by Kevin Faherty, Marketing/Communications Director

The Senior Service project is a powerful tradition at Saint Joseph Prep that provides students with an opportunity to expand their perspectives while also serving their communities in various ways. At SJP, seniors sit for final exams in late April before beginning their volunteer work at education centers, elder care facilities, soup kitchens, and other community organizations. Students learn to manage the demands of their ongoing AP courses, athletic and extracurricular commitments, and their off-campus service responsibilities.

Ms. Ashley Gabriel coordinates the program as the School's Director of Campus Ministry. "Local people and organizations now have the expectation that our students will be there every spring to help make a difference. We've gotten great feedback from the volunteer sites and they're already asking about how they can have more SJP students helping their service work," she shared.

Four students shared their experiences with classmates and teachers at the Senior Breakfast, prepared and served by the junior class. Their presentations highlighted the value of the Senior Service program.

Emily German worked at the Casserly House in Roslindale. She split her time between an after-school program and teaching adult immigrants ESL and citizenship. "Through Senior Service, I have met some incredible people who have literally changed my life...and the course of my life," she wrote. True to her word, Emily is changing her college major to fulfill her newfound vocation.

Volunteering at the ABCD Family Center in Mattapan helped Tahjay Thompson to recognize the importance of strong role models for children. Although this was an unexpected path for him, he was grateful for the experience. "Though small, these simple games and conversations mean a lot because before you know it, they've crept into your heart. It's because of these kids that I feel like I've grown closer to choosing my purpose and being the person I hope to be."

McKenzie Jennette has been inspired by the Sisters of St. Joseph and their work in human trafficking as well as



immigrant and refugee initiatives. Some of her service experience was spent alongside the Sisters, about whom she noted, "you can truly witness God's presence and love in their gracious souls and for that I am forever grateful." McKenzie also volunteered at Rosie's Place supporting women in need. It was often challenging and emotionally taxing volunteer work that helped her to recognize the many blessings in her life. "I will return to Rosie's Place and continue to use my voice to help the voiceless."

"I was actually a little nervous because I didn't want the kids to hate me," Andrew Cobuccio admitted about his first day at the Jackson Mann School in Allston. Reassured by his site coordinator, Andrew soon made close connections with the students in his class, including both autistic and underprivileged children. He quickly recognized that "school was a chance for them to get away from all that and for them to be safe and be guaranteed a meal. It is important to see what other people are going through and not just think about yourself all the time."

This is just a sampling of the experiences and lessons learned by the Class of 2018. While the project may have initially been viewed as a graduation requirement, each person took something powerful away from their service.

**ABOVE: MCKENZIE JENNETTE, ANDREW COBUCCIO, EMILY GERMAN AND TAHAY THOMPSON**

Home

by Mary Nagle, CSJ, Mission Effectiveness Coordinator , Bethany Health Care Center



Our CSJ mission and spirituality calls us to ceaselessly work for our Dear Neighbor, especially as far as Social Justice is concerned.

*Father Medaille SJ tells us “Be courageous to undertake what God wants of you and constant to persevere in what you undertake, never giving up whatever difficulties occur and whatever obstacles may be placed in your path unless you become totally powerless against them. (Maxim 66)*

These words of Father Medaille are just as relevant today as they were back in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The present state of affairs in our country must be confronted boldly and injustices must be challenged and overcome. Everyone must lend a ready hand to this task. The residents at Bethany pray continuously, day in and day out that “all may be one”, that somehow, some way peace will prevail. The residents recognize the great need for unity and reconciliation in our world, in our country and in our homes... They want to be connected with God, their Neighbor and themselves.



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**Mission Statement:**

*The Bridge is the official communication of the Office of Sponsored Ministries to inform, educate and inspire the community linked to CSJ Sponsored Ministries.*

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## Finding Our Voices

by Courtney McSparron, Program Director, Bethany Hill Place



At Bethany Hill Place we often think about social justice in terms of voice. Oftentimes people who are marginalized – like the homeless, those who have been victims of domestic violence, and those who have struggled with addiction/mental illness – aren't heard in their communities.

We know many of our residents have experienced their voice being dismissed and we want to make sure they are heard. How do we ensure we are hearing every resident's voice? How are we hearing the voices of quiet residents? Whose voice is missing? Our community's strength rests in setting these voices free and giving us all the space to co-exist.

The Bethany Hill Place Education Advisory Committee is made up of residents who meet three times a year to give input about the programming we offer. We welcome the positive and negative feedback residents have and adjust our programming based on these conversations. These meetings include our Board members, bringing residents in contact with and on equal footing with those in positions of power and authority, offering them the opportunity to exercise leadership and agency in their own lives.

Other residents feel more comfortable expressing themselves in writing and are able to use our newsletter, *The Pulse*, as a platform to be heard. They write about their experiences at Bethany Hill Place, but also feel comfortable sharing about their sobriety, families, and achievements. Some of our folks feel more at ease in an informal setting, which they find at our community building events throughout the year. At these events residents share ideas and ask questions publicly and in small groups of residents. Many residents feel most comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas one-on-one and we make space for this with our regular education goal meetings and check-ins. All new residents initially meet with staff to be welcomed and receive information about our community, but more importantly, we ask and listen carefully to find out what they want and how we can help them achieve it.

Our programming grows, our residents grow, and Bethany Hill Place grows. We want to make sure the growth is guided by the needs and wants of the people who live in our community. While hearing the voices of our residents is a boon for our community, we also know that using and practicing their voices is an energizing and vital part of all residents' time at BHP.

### WELCOME TO THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CSJ SPONSORED MINISTRIES!

On behalf of the Corporation for Sponsored Ministries of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston Board of Directors, we welcome with joy Mary Anne Doyle, CSJ!

Sister Mary Anne has taught in several schools and universities, facilitated organization planning both nationally and locally, and served as a member of the CSJ Leadership Team for six years and as a member of the board of several Sponsored Ministries. She is completing 11 years of distinguished service as business manager of St. Julia Parish in Weston.

Sister Mary Anne brings to this position a passion for mission, the skills to encourage collaboration and communication among the CSJ Sponsored Ministries, experience in providing formation opportunities for the Boards and staff of the ministries, and strategic and financial planning for these ministries. She will take up her new responsibilities in early August.



Mary Anne Doyle, CSJ

## Celebrating at Jackson School by Kathy Berube, CSJ and Jean Behenna, Mission Effectiveness Facilitators

As the school year comes to an end, there have been many opportunities to celebrate all that has been learned and accomplished at Jackson School. The students have excelled as scientists, writers, problem solvers, actresses and actors, musicians, and leaders. As we recognize their hard work and successes, we look toward the future with hope and excitement.

STEAM activities which integrate science, technology, engineering, art, and math continue to be an integral part of the Jackson curriculum, and many field trips enhanced the STEAM program. Students in grade 6 visited the MIT Museum and they participated in a hands-on workshop where they programmed robots. They also had an opportunity to visit the exhibits in the museum. Grade 2 visited the Einstein Museum in Burlington where they had the opportunity to do coding with robots, to design 2-D figures on the computers, and to observe the 3-D printing process. The annual STEAM fair was most impressive. Using the Museum of Science EIE curriculum materials, students not only gained knowledge through the engineering process, but also learned the importance of time management and teamwork.



After experiencing the STEAM Fair, it is evident that there are many future engineers and scientists at Jackson School. From April until June, Grade 6 students worked on their final STEAM project which was a 6week project based learning unit centered on the theme of the ocean. Students researched ocean topics, experienced classes conducted by experts

from the NE Aquarium, visited Wollaston Beach to research the ecosystem, went to Woods Hole for the day where they visited the Aquarium, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Museum, and finally to Nobska Lighthouse Beach to write poetry, create water colors, and explored digital photography. Their final challenge was to share what they had learned with the younger students at Jackson. Everyone learned so much about the importance of the ocean and our responsibility to care for the ocean and the environment.

The Spring Concert provided the perfect opportunity for students to showcase their musical, artistic, and acting gifts. Under the direction of the Music teacher and the Art teacher, students in grades 4-6 performed an adaptation of the Sound of Music. Students created the scenery, acted out scenes, danced and sang many of the beautiful

songs from the play. It was an amazing production enjoyed by all.

The students in grade three celebrated their success as writers during their “Book Reveal” publishing event. The students each wrote “How To” essays which were then submitted to Student Treasures which is a student publishing company. Parents were invited to the celebration to honor these emerging authors. The students were so excited to share their stories and receive their own copy of this personal publication.



June is the time for endings as well as new beginnings. During the annual Growth and Learning ceremony, the students of Jackson School celebrated their memories and academic accomplishments and bid farewell to the sixth graders. For grade six their time at Jackson culminated with a lovely graduation at Our Lady Help of Christians Church on June 7. Within the ceremony, students reflected on their time at Jackson and expressed their gratitude to all those who helped them during their years at JWP. Madden Shelley who spoke on behalf of the class offered this advice, “ Recall the good memories we’ve made, and the lessons we’ve learned. As our time together comes to a conclusion, remember to hold fast to your dreams, and know that we can do anything—we are the future.”

As the close of the year approaches, we celebrate the many accomplishments of the 2017-2018 school year. After a two year self-study and a three day visiting team evaluation, Jackson School received re-accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The re-accreditation process was a challenging yet rewarding experience.

Another exciting accomplishment is the “near completion” of the new building on campus. It has been an amazing project to observe throughout this school year. The annual JWP retreat for faculty and staff was held this year at Regis College, and Sr. Mary Murphy, CSJ was the featured speaker. The main focus was the charism and core values of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and how the mission is lived out in each ministry. Sister was most inspiring, and it was a wonderful day of reflection and renewal for all. This year at Jackson School, we certainly have had so much to celebrate: talented and gifted students, a successful re-accreditation, a new building, and a strong community guided by the core values of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

## Diversity is Beautiful by Sandra Selvarajah, Mission Effectiveness Facilitator, Walnut Park Montessori School

**“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”**

*Maya Angelou*

This quote rings so true! It is never too early to teach young children to respect other cultures and different faiths. Through our Montessori curriculum, and the tripartite interaction between children, parents and teachers we cultivate a rich diverse environment. In the classroom, our Cultural Studies lessons help children learn and appreciate different cultures, religions, celebrations, traditions, food, clothing, housing, and many other facets of life. Parents generously volunteer their time, and expertise to heighten the children's educational experience. For example, parents visit the classroom to share their family traditions about their cultural celebrations like the Chinese New Year, speaking about their professional career, or by being a guest reader of a popular book.

At the end of May, Room 4 welcomed a parent into their classroom to share their family traditions about Ramadan, a Muslim celebration that is celebrated on the 9th month of the Islamic Lunar calendar. The children heard the story of Ramadan through a picture book, sampled dates, smelled fragrant perfumes and listened to Ayesha's (Room 4 child) favorite things surrounding Ramadan. It was very educational and appropriate for 4-6 year old children. What a wonderful lesson to promote inclusiveness in our community. It is through these examples we provide an environment of exploration on how we are all alike and yet different. These lessons stay with the children for the remainder of their lives.

The longevity of these inclusive lessons was highlighted in Room 5! This May, one of our Walnut Park alumni, high school senior Isabelle Hardy (room 2 Ms Julia's daughter) returned to Walnut Park to work on her senior project in Room 5. Izzy is interested in conflict resolution and human rights, and will study International Relations at George Washington University this fall. Her interest compelled her to work on educating young children about their rights, human rights, and equality. Izzy has been working with our children on illustrating a picture book that she wrote about the *Rights of the Child* as outlined by the United Nations. The book is soon to come to Walnut Park and features the signatures of all the participating Room 5 artists. This is a true testament of what Maria Montessori conveyed in her writings... “Early childhood education is the key to the betterment of society.”

Our spring outreach project was to gift potted plants/herbs to 60 mothers living in transitional housing in Cambridge



and Dorchester. Once again, our parent population generously created and donated over 60 pots, many decorated with loving sayings. Thank you to our Women's Table liaison, Mary Rita Weschler, for bringing this project to our attention.

Finally, our year-end celebration of students and families took place in the form of our World Celebration. Each classroom tent represented their continent and was filled with antique dolls, artifacts, and the children's works were on display. Here is just one example from each classroom. Room 1 seniors conducted researched on African animals and created dioramas of the their habitats. Room 2 seniors chose a North American animal and created a diorama along with a research book. Room 3 created a beautiful banner of the Great Barrier Reef. Room 4 researched artists of Europe. Inspired by Picasso, Monet and Alberto Giacometti, children made face portraits and collages of lilies and sculptures. Room 5 seniors picked a country in Asia, researched and made a complete report of the culture pertaining to that country. The Toddler classroom focused on animals of the Rain Forest in South America. Parents and families were invited to participate with the continent, which represented their cultural heritage bringing food and wearing their native dress allowing the children and adults to fully immerse themselves in the celebration. Finally, the children performed signature songs from each continent on our new outdoor stage in our natural playground.

It is extraordinary to be different and respect what is unique about each culture but let us celebrate our world together. This final lesson demonstrates our commitment to not only valuing each individual but also celebrating those differences. What a great way to end the year!

**ABOVE: WORLD CELEBRATION DAY**

Graduation at the Ministries

Regis College 2018 88<sup>th</sup> Commencement



Fontbonne Academy Commencement



Saint Joseph Prep Commencement



## Many Forms of Violence

by Daniel Leahy, Director, Center for Mission and Service, Regis College

Like many of you, I was shocked by a recent high-level communication from the White House. Issued on May 21, then reiterated by President Trump and the White House staff the following day, the document, entitled “*What You Need To Know About The Animals of MS-13*” was issued, apparently to educate us on the activities of the notorious MS-13 gang and how the White House will save us from them. The document highlights the violence inflicted by the gang with several horrific examples and then concludes by calling the gang members “animals.” Though I was disturbed by much of this, what truly shocked me most was the way in which the document clearly reveals a White House utterly void of understanding and strategic problem solving.

Yes, violence is bad. Nobody in her or his right mind would ever endorse violence inflicted by anybody against another human being under any circumstances. We stand against violence, always and everywhere. We recognize that people can sometimes act like animals, in the sense of the degree of cruelty and depravity inflicted upon each other – that is the gang violence of the streets for sure, bare and brutal, grabbing front page headlines and White House briefings.

But let us not forget another kind of violence, sometimes more dangerous and disguised. It is a violence which quietly infiltrates our social systems and brutalizes people through economic and political institutions. It is a violence that creates and reinforces marginalization, poverty and despair. This violence doesn’t often make the papers.

Back to the MS-13 Communique: how are we to think about it? Do we think of fellow human beings as animals? Our Judeo-Christian tradition empowers us with the wisdom to separate the person from his or her actions, to separate the sin from the sinner. In the case of horrific gang violence committed against innocent people, that is not an easy thing to do. In fact, most often we can only do that with and through the power of God’s Holy Spirit of Love.



Another unique and helpful perspective was offered to the Regis College community last March, as we hosted Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ. His widely known book, [Tattoos on the Heart](#), issued as a Common Read for our first year Seminar program, deals with violence and the sin, reconciliation, and healing of gang members in Los Angeles.

Fr. Boyle, in sharing experiences about his ministry over the past thirty years with present and ex-gang members, did not minimize the violence associated with gang activity, calling it “brutal and sinful.” He encouraged us, however, despite the brutality, to not lose sight of the humanity of the gang members, humanity that often gets obscured, shrouded, and buried deeply under layers of despair. Fr. Boyle insightfully explained to a packed theatre: “No hopeful kid has ever joined a gang.” He encouraged us to build a bridge rather than a wall with those in need of encouragement, understanding, and acceptance. Fr. Boyle praised Regis for the service and immersion experiences offered, like our trip to Boyle Heights in L.A. where he works. He said it is important for us to “go to the margins and simply be there with people so that, one day, the margins will be erased.”

So, to return to one of the highest offices in the world calling fellow human beings “animals:” We reject that statement. It is untrue, short sighted, ignorant, and certainly not helpful. I am grateful for the wisdom of our Catholic tradition and those who remind us of our true identity, our sacred dignity- our humanity. And I’m especially grateful to the Sisters of Saint Joseph who also serve to constantly remind and encourage us to build bridges, rather than walls.

Left: Fr. Greg Boyle in the Center  
Above: 18 Regis College Students Volunteer at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles

**Widening Our Circles**

by Amy Northrop, Faculty, Fontbonne Academy

For the students, faculty, and staff at Fontbonne Academy, widening our circles, opening our hearts and minds to others, has been at the forefront of our consciousness this year. We have been learning to embrace the idea that there is no single story that defines the lived experience of all. We have in fact, been learning to listen more closely to the stories of every person and have been making it our goal to open ourselves up to the “other.” It is a process, a work in progress, and sometimes we stumble. As we stumble however, we also help one another up, we forgive, we reconcile and we learn.

Maya Angelou once said, “It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and strength” - which I firmly believe to be true. However, more and more I am noticing that the young people are often the ones teaching us this lesson. On the whole, our students have taken up the call to inclusivity with enthusiastic fervor. This year we have seen a number of initiatives brought forth by our students to encourage greater respect for and participation across cultures, races, sexual orientations, socio-economic status, gender identity, religion, etc. It has been an incredible privilege to accompany our students on this journey of justice, advocacy and love.

Throughout the year, the Adult Learning Community engaged one another in a conversation around diversity and inclusion with Dr. Michelle Cromwell of Regis College. In February, our Student Union of Minorities worked diligently to bring Michael Curry, former President for the New England Chapter of the NAACP, to speak to our community about racism, police brutality and bias.

Additionally, in May several students led an initiative to bring awareness to issues surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community by putting together a display outside our dining hall. Finally, approximately 40+ students on our diversity committee have worked tirelessly all year to open up the conversation around inclusion, advocate for the

experiences of one another, and bring about lasting change to Fontbonne. These are just a few of the ways in which our students, along with our staff and faculty, have heard the call to justice and have boldly embraced its imperative.



Embracing difference, championing equity, and speaking truth to power are never easy and the potential consequences of such actions can often lead us to remain silent in the face of injustice. At Fontbonne, our entire community is being encouraged to use its collective and individual voices to address injustice where we see it, be that in our own community or in the wider world. We are, as we will ever be, on a journey to a more just society.

Sometimes we struggle to get it right but the Mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph will continue to call us into greater communion with God, with ourselves, and with one another. We aim to continuously widen our circles and stand ready to more completely embrace those who find themselves on the margins.

**ABOVE: DR. MICHELLE CROMWELL SPEAKS AT COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT EVER-WIDENING CIRCLES**



**REST IN PEACE, OUR BELOVED SISTER ANN MARIE GHILONI.**

There are days we live as if death were nowhere in the background;  
 from joy to joy to joy, from wing to wing,  
 from blossom to blossom to impossible blossom,  
 to sweet impossible blossom.

~ Li-Young Lee (Rose)

Now for you time is forever young, and flowers are always in bloom.

**LEFT: PHOTO BY SISTER ANN MARIE, ITALY 2014**

