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Mount Saint Joseph Academy pairs a landmark year of championships with a \$20 million campus transformation built for the whole community.

pg. 64



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A New Era Rising

Mount Saint Joseph Academy pairs a landmark year of championships with a \$20 million campus transformation built for the whole community.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy students have never lacked drive. What they have lacked, until now, is a building that matches it.

This fall, the all-girls Catholic college preparatory school in Flourtown opens a new state-of-the-art Athletic Center—the first phase of a \$20 million campus transformation called Beyond Pearls. But ask anyone on campus, and they will say the real story is not the building; it's what happens inside.

"This center will provide

opportunities for every student—not only our athletes—to build community, prioritize wellness, and experience the sense of belonging that defines the Mount," says Mount Saint Joseph Academy Athletic Director Becky Murphy.

That sense of belonging was on full display last school year, as Mount teams put together one of the most decorated seasons in program history. The school's Youth Second Varsity 8+ crew boat brought home the program's second-ever title in the USRowing Youth National



A new state-of-the-art Athletic Center, the first phase of Mount Saint Joseph Academy's \$20 million campus transformation.





“ This year, our theme is ‘Belong. Believe. Become.’—and this transformation is that promise made visible. Every young woman who walks through these doors will belong to something bigger than herself, believe in what she’s capable of, and become the leader the world is waiting for.”

—Charlene Diorka, SSJ, President, Mount Saint Joseph Academy



Mount is coming off one of the most decorated years in the school's history, with several teams earning prestigious championships.

Championships—its first national title in 20 years—punctuating a spring that also included Scholastic National Championships, Stotesbury Cup titles, and Mid-Atlantic Youth Championships.

The basketball team closed its own chapter of Mount history, winning the AACA Championship—the program's first since 2016—in what turned out to be its final season in the Mounties' longtime home gym at La Salle College High School. In the team's last game there, students packed the bleachers and sang together after the final buzzer: the kind of moment, coaches say, that happens only when members of a community truly show up for each other.

Beyond the scoreboard, the school's Firebirds Robotics Team—the longest-running all-female FIRST Robotics team in the world, founded on campus in 1999—posted the highest score of any team in the Mid-Atlantic region this year en route to the Mid-Atlantic Championship at Lehigh University.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy expects its updated campus to reflect that same range—serious achievement paired with genuine community and school spirit. Beyond the Athletic Center, plans are underway for a Donna Hanson Woolman '88 Music Center, honoring a beloved 1988 graduate's love of music, and a Sister Mary Dacey, SSJ Welcome

Center. The latter was named for the school's first president and made possible by a \$1 million gift from the DePaul family.

“Sister Mary's ministry was about creating a place where every person felt they belonged the moment they walked through the door,” says Nicole “Nikki” West '87, Executive Director of Mission and Inclusion. “This Welcome Center will carry that same spirit into a new generation of Mounties.”

For a school long known for its academic rigor, the message is clear: Seriousness and joy are not opposites at the Mount. More than 90 percent of students take part in the school's 55 clubs, organizations, and service teams, and school-wide traditions such as Spirit Week, Founders' Day, and performances from the school's own jazz band dot the calendar.

That spirit showed up in force earlier this year. The school's inaugural March Magic Day of Giving, held March 19 on the Feast of Saint Joseph, drew 776 donors from more than 26 states and raised \$190,444 in a single day. Highlights included a student-run “Charity Day” complete with a collaborative quilt station, a basketball competition, and an afternoon variety show that had the auditorium roaring. In April, Field Day returned to campus after a long absence, filling the afternoon with relay races and tug-of-war

between students, faculty, and staff. The same week, alumnae working in law, medicine, professional sports, and beyond returned to campus for Career Day, a reminder that the Mount sisterhood extends well past graduation.

Prospective families can see it all firsthand at Mount Saint Joseph Academy's Fall Open House on September 27. The wider community is invited to celebrate the Athletic Center's completion at a Grand Opening Celebration on October 23, featuring campus tours, a Museum of Mount Athletics, and an evening Varsity Volleyball game.

“This year, our theme is ‘Belong. Believe. Become.’—and this transformation is that promise made visible,” says Mount Saint Joseph Academy President Charlene Diorka, SSJ. “Every young woman who walks through these doors will belong to something bigger than herself, believe in what she's capable of, and become the leader the world is waiting for.” ■

Mount Saint Joseph Academy

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