

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Claudia Danielle Bradley, Chase Thomas Brownhill, Abigail Rose Bunner, Samuel Howard Dennis IV, Gabrielle Sophia Getz, Olivia Gene Hansen, Daniel David Helsel, Nikolai Michael Kovall, Mingzhe Jay Li, Kaelyn Hannah Magaw, Madelyn Joelle Magaw, Skylar Lynn Marrero, Stella Ann McConaghy, Abigail Rose Parr, Mason Taylor Roe, Brooke Lyn Taylor, Laney Marie Tyler, Nicholas Edward Veasey

"The Sisters and teachers at MAA make you feel seen and academically challenged—they will give you tough love when you need it and be your cheerleader with encouragement when you need it, too."

-Chase Brownhill

"Mount Aviat Academy has taught us many things such as the importance of leadership, service, and faith. Now we will begin high school with these strong foundational skills and beliefs."

-Gabrielle Getz

"Thank you to the teachers, staff, and Sisters for making our time here at MAA so special. We will take these memories with us as we head to high school and beyond."

-Kaelyn Magaw



Mount Aviat Academy



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Thank you to our staff and parents for volunteering your time and talents to photograph school events.

MISSION

The Mission of Mount Aviat Academy is threefold:

- to provide instruction in the message of Christ, according to the teachings of the Catholic Church, within the context of the gentle and caring spirit of St. Francis de Sales;
- to offer an educational environment that promotes high academic standards;
- to instill the principles of scholarship, citizenship and service in the minds and hearts of the students.

Educating students to be no more and no less than their best.



FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK:

Preschool has always been a part of MAA; however, in reality it only opened in 1979. Mount Aviat opened as a kindergarten in 1954. As interest in "early" enrollment grew, the Sisters answered the call with characteristic care and vision—launching a preschool program led by Sr. Mary Vincent. Affectionately known as the Oblate Sisters Nursery, it first took root in the lower level of the convent. When a modest home on the current site became

available, it opened the door—literally and figuratively—to a fresh chapter. The summer of 2023 became a whirlwind of activity, as the home was lovingly transformed into a vibrant early childhood learning space, made possible by the heartfelt generosity of benefactors. Throughout the years, this building has seen its share of first day tears, Mother's Day celebrations, step up ceremonies, and so much more. It is in fact good news to say we've outgrown this space! Over the past few years, we have expanded our early learning program to 3-year-olds and then added a second class of 4-year-olds. Although we were happy to share our library and gathering room (fondly the original nursery) with our young learners, we are ready to welcome them back for the 2025-2026 school year in their newly renovated and expanded building! This is our biggest expansion since Holy Family Hall was built in 1993. We hope you are able to visit this school year and see the vibrant classrooms (see page 3 for more on this).

I am thrilled to share another highlight from this school year: MAA's Future City Team took 1st place *for the second year in a row* in the Regional Mid-Atlantic competition and participated again in the Global Finals in Washington, DC. We are so proud of our students and their commitment to this program and our staff for their support of our students! As many of you know, Sr. Frances Carol will be moving to Towson, Maryland to teach at Immaculate Heart of Mary. We will miss her dearly at MAA but know she will bring her enthusiasm for STREAM to all those budding scientists and engineers!

Finally, all we do comes back to you, our supporters, our community because we could not do all we do without you. From supporting the Sisters by purchasing cream puffs during the annual Cream Puff sale to slipping on your running shoes and joining us on the MAA 5k and Sister Walk to bidding at the Evening at the Vineyard Dinner Auction, we are so grateful for all the many ways you show us your support. We look forward to welcoming you back to campus during the coming school year.

Yours in Christ,

In John Cliyabeth, OSFS Sister John Elizabeth Callaghan, OSFS



ur current PreK3 students—the future MAA Class of 2035—are about to become part of something special: they'll be the very first to learn, play, and grow in our brand-new preschool building, opening for the 2025-2026 school year!

This beautiful new space is designed just for them, with bright classrooms, engaging play areas, and learning spaces created to spark imagination and support their earliest school experiences. Every detail was thoughtfully planned to make their introduction to school joyful and meaningful.

We are excited to share a photo of some of these future pioneers—students who will be among the first to call this new space their own. Also pictured is a glimpse of the completed exterior, showcasing the transformation made possible by the support of our incredible school community.

Want to be a part of this milestone? Consider donating an item from our Preschool Amazon Wishlist, which will be posted to the school's social media accounts as soon as it is finalized. Every gift, no matter the size, will help us create a welcoming and well-equipped space for our youngest learners.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MAA'S CLASS OF 2025 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Padua Academy

Merit: Gabrielle Getz, Stella McConaghy, Laney Tyler

St. Mark's High School

Merit: Chase Brownhill, Olivia Hansen, Stella McConaghy

The countdown to Fall 2025 is on, and we can't wait to share this special beginning with you!



MOUNT AVIAT UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 21 Ice Cream Social September 28 Roast Beef Dinner

October 6 Golf Tournament at Newark Country Club

November 22 63rd Annual Christmas Bazaar



For the second year in a row, MAA's Future City Team won 1st place for the Mid-Atlantic Region. The team continued on to the Finals Competition in Washington, DC, where they competed with national and international teams. The Future City Team, with the support of Mrs. Dymowski, Mrs. Hanby, Mr. Nesnow, and MAA alum mentors, worked for months to design a floating city with technologies and engineering that would be developed a 100 years from now.



KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS POSTER CONTEST WINNERS 2025

1st place: Daniel Binoy, Delaney Schwander, Collins Black, Baylie Pratt, Payton Whiteman 2nd Place: Levon Samaranayake, Elena Wynn, Jacob Newman, Amelia Dennis, Daniel Helsel

3rd Place: Mollie Birney, Avery Applegate, Kelyn Arnold, Mason Ware, Brett Cooper

Honorable Mention: Elliot Andrews, Ella Dunlap, Tenley Handy, Sophie McCallister, Ellen Rose

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READY... SET... MAA 5K!

ain loomed on the overcast day, casting uncertainty over the 12th Annual MAA 5K & Sister Walk on Sunday, April 6. But the skies held, and the event went off without a hitch! We had 139 male and female runners ranging from age 4 to 76 years old. This year we had new overall winners in both the male and female categories. First place Overall Male was John Ford, from Phoenix, MD, with a time of 18:38. First place Overall Female was Lisa Dang, from Alexandria, VA, with a time of 20:38.

We had a record number of participants, sponsorships and donations this year. The money raised through this event will be used to replace the pads in the gym to ensure the safety of all students during sporting events.

We would like to thank our race sponsors whose support makes this fun community event possible. Platinum Sponsor: Remline Gold Sponsors: Oblate Sisters of Frances de Sales and Nowland Associates, Inc. Silver Sponsors: Dever Law Group, Haverford Trust Company, Kristin Lewis Follow My Heels at Integrity RE, Formal Affairs, Domain Spa & Salon, McCool Insurance, and Moon Air Inc.

We are grateful for all the race day volunteers who helped the event run smoothly and safely from the start to the finish line. Having the support of school families, alumni, and community members makes this event a success. A special note of thanks to the 5K race committee, Jessica Carlaw and Janie Trumbull for organizing the event.

SAVE THE DATE! Run, Walk or Volunteer! APRIL 19, 2026







1. Under the direction of Mr. Spadea, our Band students impress the audience with all they have learned all year at their Spring Band Concert. 2. MAA's fifth and sixth grade "sailors" share the stories of Noah and the Great Flood, Jonah and the Great Fish, and Paul's Shipwreck in *The Sailor's Bible*. 3. PreK4 student Elizabeth Bodkin and her grandmother enjoy a sweet treat during the annual Grandparents' Day celebration. 4. MAA's choir sings sweetly at the Diocesan Evening of Sacred Music. 5. First grader Ava Bogus joyfully crowns Mary at the annual May Procession. 6. Sisters Ashlynn and Alivia Jaros enjoy showing their grandparents to their classrooms after lunch during Grandparents' Day. 7. Seventh graders pull with all their might during a fun game of Tug-of-War during Field Day. 8. Sixth graders proudly show their graduation certificates from the DARE program led by Sgt. Creek. The drug abuse prevention education program is intended to give elementary school children the skills needed to resist peer pressure to use tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. 9. Second grader Olivia Wood and Sr. Joseph Margaret are all smiles as Olivia enjoys a Kona water ice treat at the Family Celebration. 10. Kindergartner Levon Samaranayake proudly presents his 100 day project,







FRIENDS' FAVORITES: CREAM PUFF DAY AND FAMILY DANCE



1. Sr. Joseph Margaret keeps volunteers Joe Fassano, Philip Kimura, and Pat Seigel smiling as they work to fill 6,500 cream puffs during the annual sale. 2. Zachary Seigel and Jamie Gleber prove that volunteering is fun work as they keep the kitchen moving on Cream Puff Day. 3. The Friends host the annual Family Dance and our youngest students don their green for the St. Patrick's Day theme.





BUY A DONKEY!

o, the Oblate Sisters are not setting up a farm in Childs. Buy a donkey is the phonetic pronounciation of Baie Dankie, an often repeated phrase during a recent trip to Africa to visit our Oblate Sisters' communities and their missions. It means thank you very much. Thanks to the generosity of many of you, we saw firsthand so many changes:

- our 150+ children who stay with our Sisters for months at a time to receive an education enjoy more fresh fruits and vegetables and sleep on beds with new pillows and blankets
- two classrooms have been built to welcome more 4 and 5-year-olds into our schools
- protection against the intense sun has been extended over playgrounds offering open play
- a playground has been built by and with teens to keep our youth busy and active at the end of the school day into early evening. Swings built from old tires, ramps for skating just to name a few
- and the list goes on...

As we move into summer, several changes will be seen with our Oblate Sisters locally. After devoting five years here at MAA, Sr. Frances Carol is joining the community in Towson, Maryland to spread Salesian spirituality at Immaculate Heart of Mary and work with young people in vocation ministry. Sister's absence will be quite a loss at



MAA but, hopefully, a blessing in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The staff at MAA recently



wished a tearful farewell to Sister and reminded her of all her beautiful gifts she shared with our community such as her gift of music, science, adventure, spirit and so much more. Surely she will share these gifts at IHM now. Sr. Miriam Elizabeth, on the other hand, is now a familiar and permanent presence in Childs and brings her positive spirit and good nature with her.





Thomas Dymowski '17 graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science in Materials Science Engineering. Thomas won the A. James Clark School of Global Engineering Award and the Department of Science and Engineering student service award.



Declan Landis '17 graduated from Temple University in December 2024 with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism with a Sports Media certificate.

Annabella Martuscelli '17 graduated summa cum laude from the University of South Carolina, achieving a 3.9 GPA and accumulating multiple cords and sashes. Annabella had many invaluable

experiences during the past four years of schooling, especially studying abroad in Florence, Italy.





Christian Nichols '17 graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering.

Sean Spych '17 graduated with a Computer Science degree from Georgia Institute of Technology. Sean is working as a hardware developer in the Quantum Lab at IBM.





Congratulations to our alumni who graduated from St. Mark's High School this year: Ava Poch, Aidan Venters, Trey Spohn, Jack Dymowski, Erica Poch, Emma Fausnaugh, Peyton Wikes, Charley Fockler, and Sienna Trumbull.





Don't forget to like our Facebook page (Mount Aviat Academy Alumni Association) and follow MAA on Instagram @MountAviat.

If you have alumni news you would like to share, please contact Mrs. Charlene Nichols, Admissions Director, at Admissions@MountAviat.org.



Save the Date! Monday, October 6, 2025

Newark Country Club



about how to reserve your spot or become an event sponsor, contact Tracy Harreld at tharreld@mountaviat.org









AN EVENING IN THE VINEYARD: A MEMORABLE 30TH ANNUAL DINNER AUCTION

n Saturday, March 1, MAA celebrated the 30th Annual Dinner Auction with an unforgettable evening! The "An Evening in the Vineyard" themed auction took place in St. Joseph Hall, where it was filled with laughter, lively conversations, and the warmth of cherished friends and family. A heartfelt thank you to the 150+ guests—school parents, grandparents, alumni, alumni parents, and new faces—who came together to make the night truly special.

The space was transformed into a stunning vineyard, complete with rustic wine barrels, the calming scents of eucalyptus and lavender, and an abundance of florals and greenery that brought the theme to life. The Alicia Maxwell Project set the perfect atmosphere with smooth, easy-listening tunes, effortlessly transitioning from cocktails to dinner and keeping the energy flowing throughout the night. The Chesapeake Inn delighted us with delectable Italian specialties, adding an extra layer of flavor to our vineyard experience.

We were thrilled to welcome back Mr. Chris Locke as our auctioneer this year. Once again, he did an outstanding job of keeping the energy high and the excitement flowing as he auctioned off an incredible array of items. The live auction kicked off

in signature style with the highly-sought-after Oblate Sisters' apple pie, and from there, the bidding soared on unique and exclusive items. Highlights included beach rentals, a premium Traeger pellet grill set, the rare Van Winkle Special Reserve and Panamonte XXV Rum, and coveted 76ers tickets. Of course, also included were beloved classics, such as Principal for a Day and the VIP Parking Spot, which never fail to draw enthusiastic bids.

At this year's Paddle Raise, our community came together to champion the arts at Mount Aviat. Through their generosity, we secured funding for materials, instruments, and training—fueling creativity, inspiring young artists, and ensuring the MAA Arts Program continues to flourish with color, music, and imagination.

A heartfelt thank you to the Auction Committee, led by Patty Cook, for their hard work and dedication in planning this event. Committee Members included the following: Sr. John Elizabeth, Sr. Anne Elizabeth, Sr. Joseph Margaret, Sr. Joseph Anne, Sr. Frances Carol, Phuong Besancon, Tracy Harreld, Stephanie Hendron, Cherri Moran, and Jenny Tyler. We are also deeply grateful to our incredible volunteers—your time, talents, and enthusiasm were essential in making the evening a resounding success. Your efforts truly made all the difference!

MAA is thankful to our community partners and dear friends for helping bring our theme to life and for creating memorable experiences for our guests: Chesapeake Inn (catering and beverages), Elk Creek Home Improvements (favors), Pat D'Annunzio (staging), Brian and Janie Trumbull (staging), The Alicia Maxwell Project (entertainment), Mike McKenzie (sound and lighting), Joan Copeland (photography), Rusty Eder (emcee), Chris Locke (auctioneer).

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Ms. Stephanie Senkevich

In Memory of Sidney and Elizabeth Olson

Mr. and Mrs. Mark Manniso

In Honor of Abby Parr

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Parr

Judy Pyle (aka My Mom) Who Was A

Teacher's Aide Until I Graduated In 1983! Mr. Kip Pvle

In Honor of Alvssa and Jaxon Quiglev

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St. Francis de Sales

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bredahl The Palm Family

In Honor of Mary Queen of the Universe

Mr. Bruce LeBrun

In Memory of all the deceased Oblate Sisters and Fathers, Lay Faculty and Staff, High School and Elementary Alumni of Mount Aviat Academy

from the 1960s to present time.

Mr. and Mrs. John Mackie



The Aviat Foundation Endowment Trust

was created in 2006 to support the long-term educational mission of the Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales at Mount Aviat Academy. The Aviat Foundation is a financial asset that provides reliable income and supports the long-term financial security of MAA. Donations to the Aviat Foundation (the "principal") are not spent; these funds are invested and professionally managed. Only a portion of the earnings of the Aviat Foundation are used to support the operating needs of MAA each year—allowing us to sustainably grow the Aviat Foundation while supporting the needs of MAA. Original donations (the principal)

stay intact—gifts to the Aviat Foundation will generate income in perpetuity. A gift to the Aviat Foundation is truly a gift that keeps on giving! The Endowment helps support the Oblate Sisters in fulfilling their educational mission and ensures that future generations have access to a strong, faith-based Catholic education at MAA.

The income earned by the Aviat Foundation directly supports all of our students and families! For the 2024-2025 school year, the Aviat Foundation contributed over \$160,000 to MAA—the 19th year of continuous support. Income generated by the Aviat Foundation and provided to Mount Aviat Academy provides critical funding to

- retain dedicated teachers and staff,
- expand learning resources for students,
- and maintain affordable tuition, to support making Catholic educating accessible to more families.

Due to the generosity of our donors and supporters, since its founding, the Endowment has contributed over one million dollars that has directly benefited all Mount Aviat Academy students and families.

Ways You Can Support the Aviat Foundation

- Make a multi-year pledge and/or monetary donation;
- Initiate a Qualified Charitable Distribution from a retirement account (a tax-smart option for some donors);
- Volunteer to serve on an Aviat Foundation sub-committee;
- Establish a named fund (can be restricted to support a specific need of the Oblate Sisters or MAA); and/or
- Include a legacy gift to the Aviat Foundation in your will or estate plans.

If you have questions about the Aviat Foundation or would like to meet with us to discuss how you may become more involved in supporting the needs of the Oblate Sisters and Mount Aviat Academy, please contact Brenda Hendron, Aviat Foundation Chair, at 410.920.6399, hendronb@comcast.net or Sr. John Elizabeth, Principal, at 410.398.2206, principal@mountaviat.org.



CELEBRATING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE AVIAT FOUNDATION

We were blessed with a beautiful evening and much to celebrate as we gathered on June 6 for our annual endowment reception. This year's event was graciously hosted by Mrs. Mary Benvegno at her beautiful riverside home, where her warm hospitality, love for Disney, and cherished items from the Oblate Sisters' missions were reflected throughout her home. Our quests and generous donors enjoyed not only the beautiful setting and good food, but a wonderful opportunity to visit with the Oblate Sisters and other long-time MAA friends. The evening provided a wonderful opportunity to share the impact that the Aviat Foundation has had, as the Aviat Foundation Chair, Brenda Hendron, shared highlights of the Foundation's continued success and the remarkable support it has provided to the Oblate Sisters and Mount Aviat Academy over the past 20 years.

The St. Leonie Aviat Commitment to Catholic Education Award

At this year's Endowment Reception, the Oblate Sisters were proud to honor Mark and Karen Manniso as the 2025 recipients of the St. Leonie Aviat Commitment to Catholic Education Award. Long-time champions of Mount Aviat Academy and steadfast witnesses to their Catholic faith, the Mannisos exemplify what it means to

live out a mission of service. All three of their daughters—Julianna '02, Teresa '04, and Emma '04—attended MAA, but the Mannisos' dedication extended far beyond the role of parent. From supporting athletics to volunteering at countless events and more, they became woven into the fabric of the school community.

Mark has served on the Board of Trustees, contributing significantly to the school's reaccreditation efforts and providing invaluable guidance on school initiatives. Behind the scenes, the Mannisos have been tireless advocates for Mount Aviat's mission. Their warm, familiar presence at school events has become a symbol of unwavering support, and over the last 30 years, many have witnessed firsthand how their efforts nurtured not only the success of their daughters but also the school's growth.

In honoring them, Mount Aviat celebrates a legacy of faith, family, and service that continues to inspire.



Please remember in prayer our family members, friends, and donors who have passed away this year:

William Baggott - Jeffrey Bienert - Burnard W. Cline, Jr. - Larry Frati, Jr. - Alex Gonzales, Sr. - Alex V. Gonzales, Jr. - Eleanor Gonzales Dennis F. Kelly - John C. Mackie - Kaye Merrey - John Murray - Gil Nagle - Peter Selhorst Henry B. Steenkamer - Michael Swanson - Lauri Witte - Rev. Michael Vogt

Please send your special intentions to us at oblatesisters@mountaviat.org.

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Gifts of \$100,000 or more

(None)

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Gifts of \$25,000 to \$99,999

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Mount Aviat Academy Dinner Auction

2013-2025 Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales, Childs

Brisson Society

Gifts of \$10,000 to \$24,999

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In Memory of Marian J. Tyler

Mrs. Lauri Witte

George and Mary Benvegno, Sr. Endowment Fund to benefit the Oblate Sisters of Saint Francis de Sales

Mrs. Mary E. Benvegno

THE GEMPESAW/ALBAY FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Conrado "Bobby" Gempesaw and Clavel Albay Gempesaw, Daniel Gempesaw '00, David Gempesaw '03

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Charles P. Nemeth, JD, PhD, LL.M

THE MARY MALONEY ENDOWED FUND

Estate of Mary Maloney





If you no longer wish to receive the Link, please let us know by telephoning the school at 410.398.2206, ext. 214. Thank you.



Students Sail on the Sultana

Fourth graders take a field trip to Chestertown, Maryland, where they enjoy sailing on the Sultana! The 1768 schooner Sultana introduces students to the history and environment of the Chesapeake Bay.

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