

Madonna *matters*

June 2020

Stories and Highlights of the 2019-2020 School Year



Pictured above; Melenie S., senior Madonna scholar completing her E-Learning at home.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the stay-at-home order presented challenges for both the program and for our scholars. The ACT prep classes were moved to an online platform and the final college campus visit of the school year was conducted as a virtual visit. Although school doors were closed, our scholars continued their classes through e-learning and online resources. At home within their communities, scholars showed their resilience and generosity of spirit by helping their families and reaching out to friends and neighbors in need. We are proud of our scholars who went above and beyond to help others during this crisis.

The Madonna Foundation, sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, continues the tradition the Sisters began at Madonna High School in 1949. Established in 2001, the Foundation has provided more than 1,400 awards totaling \$3,200,000 in scholarship support, along with dynamic college readiness programming. To all our supporters and donors who help us create the next generation of accomplished and compassionate leaders, we say THANK YOU!!!!

Madonna Foundation Now in Six Remaining All-Girls Catholic High Schools

The Madonna Foundation is the only one in the region focusing exclusively on educating young women and preparing them for college. In August 2019, the Madonna Foundation welcomed our freshmen at our sixth partner high school, Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School on the city's southwest side. Our five other partner schools include: Resurrection College Preparatory High School; Josephinum Academy; Trinity High School, Our Lady of Tepeyac High School and Regina Dominican. We are delighted to have expanded the Madonna Scholars Program in the remaining all-girls Catholic high schools in the Chicago area.

Our Scholars

Seventeen freshmen were selected for the 2019-2020 school year. We also welcomed back fifteen sophomores, fifteen juniors and thirteen seniors.



Madonna High School.



Madonna scholars and families volunteer at Misericordia Heart of Mercy.

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Attention Former Madonnians and Teachers

The MHS Alumnae Association is in the process of updating their records and they want to hear from you! Please email your name (include maiden), address, phone, email and graduation year to madonnaalumnae@gmail.com. Also, let us know if you're interested in joining the MHS Alumnae Board. For all the latest alumnae news and information, join their Facebook group: Madonna High School (Chicago, IL).

Learn More About the Madonna Foundation

Visit our website at www.madonnascholars.org and follow us on Facebook @[Madonnianpride](https://www.facebook.com/Madonnianpride). For more information about charitable giving opportunities, contact Betsy Garbrecht at 331.318.5170 or egarbrecht@franciscanministries.org.

If you are a Madonna Scholar or Madonna High School alumna we would love to hear from you!

College Visits

The Madonna scholars visited the campuses of St. Xavier University and Loyola University. In addition to learning about the admissions process, they got a sense of the unique environment of each school through leadership workshops, presentations for first-generation and minority students and conversations with professors and student leaders. Our third college visit to Illinois State University scheduled for April was cancelled due to the pandemic. However, our students had the opportunity to participate in a virtual ISU college tour. This interactive tour allowed the students and parents to ask questions of the faculty, staff and student leaders at ISU. We encourage scholars' parents to participate to help them understand college preparedness.



Madonna scholar sophomores enjoy their leadership workshop hosted by the Gannon Scholars at Loyola.

Academic Enrichment

In partnership with the Student Counsel, the Madonna Foundation provided ACT test preparation and individualized study throughout the year for our scholars. Year-long prep classes and online instruction helped them increase their ACT scores, opening more doors to college acceptances.

To further scholar interests in STEAM, the Madonna Foundation formed a new community partnership with Automated Business Designs. Founder Terri Roeslmeier, MHS Alumna '74, and Mary, her colleague, presented to our students at Our Lady of Tepeyac, Mother McAuley and Trinity High Schools. Scholars had the opportunity to participate in an interactive program, interfacing with ABD's database in real time to expose them to careers in software design and coding. We are so grateful for this new partnership!

In September, the Madonna scholars participated in a Lunch & Learn event presented by the trained prevention education staff of St. Jude House, a domestic violence shelter in Crown Point, Indiana and a Franciscan Ministries ministry. The topic, Safe Dating and Healthy Relationships, gave scholars the knowledge and tools needed to build healthy relationships and keep themselves safe through learning about setting boundaries, communication and respect.

Summer Internship Program

Three rising seniors spent the summer of 2019 working at the Franciscan Ministries corporate office in Lemont, Illinois. This new program enables students to gain valuable work experience in a professional setting and provides an opportunity to increase vital skills such as problem solving and time management. Through this program, the students' confidence grew as they successfully completed projects and gained knowledge that will help them in their future careers.

Service and Spiritual Retreats

To instill and foster the spirit of giving back, scholars participated in a number of service projects, including a missioning retreat and volunteer opportunity at Misericordia Home in Chicago, which provides care and services to persons with developmental disabilities. In December, the students hosted Christmas parties for the residents at two of the Franciscan Ministries senior living communities, St. Joseph Village and Mother Teresa Home.

In April, Madonna scholars created beautiful hand-made thank you cards and wrote words of encouragement for our dedicated staff of heroes working in all of our senior living communities, ensuring our residents care and safety during the pandemic.



Madonna scholars during their college visit to St. Xavier University.



Our 2020 Graduates

All thirteen Madonna seniors graduated this spring and will attend college in the fall. Their hard work and dedication resulted in multiple acceptances and scholarship offers from colleges and universities coast to coast! The aggregate total of scholarship offers was more than \$6,200,000!

Madonna Scholar Programming Highlights 2019-2020

Career Day Events

To gain an understanding of potential career paths and an exposure to a variety of professional environments, Madonna Scholars visited NBC 5 News Studio; Entercom Chicago, a division of the national network of over 235 radio stations across the country; Andersen Tax, and HSE – Huntington Bank in Chicago. Scholars had a behind the scenes tour of NBC 5 and tested their skills as news anchors and weather reporters; learned about Chicago radio from the on air personalities, and were exposed to careers in the accounting and investment banking fields. We are grateful to our career day hosts: Zoraida Sambolin, MHS alumnae '83 and news anchor at NBC 5; Mitch Rosen, operations director at Entercom; Rosa DeLuna –Frede, MHS alumna '91 and managing partner at Andersen Tax, and Tom Dannenberg, president at HSE – Huntington Bank Chicago.

On February 28th the Women Everywhere organization invited the Madonna scholars to participate in their career day event at the Cook County Court house. It was great exposure to a variety of careers in law. We are so grateful for the opportunity.



Rosa De-Luna Frede, managing partner at Andersen Tax and MHS alumna '91, hosts the Madonna scholars during Career Day.



Madonna junior and senior scholars with Jen and Krista at 104.3 Jams radio station.



Zoraida Sambolin, NBC 5 news anchor and MHS alumna '83, hosts the Madonna scholars during Career Day.

Madonna Scholars 2020

Melenie Sianez
University of Illinois at Chicago

Monica Antunez
Benedictine College-Kansas

Trixie Ayettey
University of Illinois-Champaign

Chelsea Galarza
Wilbur Wright College

Jennifer Gonzalez
Dominican University

Jocelyn Guerra
Northern Illinois University

Cristina Olmos
Bradley University

Daniela Olmos
Bradley University

Jada Patterson
Albion College, MI

Ashanti Teruel
University of Illinois-Champaign

Madeline Vargas
Dominican University

Evelyn Murillo
Knox College

Liliana Matias
St. Olaf College



HSE President Tom Dannenberg and staff show the Madonna scholars real time market trades during their Career Day visit.

Supporting the Madonna Foundation

Madonna Mile June 2019

More than 70 participants gathered in Lemont for the inaugural Madonna Mile fundraising walk in June 2019. Participants learned about the history of the Sisters while enjoying the beautiful grounds of the Franciscan Sisters' property. The walk was sponsored by local area businesses as well as the businesses affiliated with Madonna High School alumnae. If you would like to sponsor this year's walk or find out how to participate, please reach out to Betsy Garbrecht at 331-318-5170.

Trivia Night Event

The second annual Trivia Night welcomed over 175 guests on February 29 at Resurrection High School. Alumnae and friends gathered with Madonna scholar families for the friendly competition. While enjoying food and drinks and meeting old friends, teams tested their trivia knowledge to benefit the Madonna Foundation. Save the date (February 27, 2021) for next year's Trivia Night and get your team together! Thank you, Resurrection High School for hosting and the MHS Alumnae planning committee for creating this fun-filled night!



MHS class of 1977 enjoying the fun at Trivia Night.

Madonna Foundation Advisory Council

To further the work of the Madonna Foundation, the Madonna Advisory Council was formed in fall 2018 to bring together a group of five professional women deeply committed to our mission. We are pleased to announce the addition of two new Council members, bringing our group to seven dedicated members. Well-established in their careers and communities, they work with us to build awareness of our mission and expand networks, guide strategies, advocate on our behalf to broaden our base of support, and personally support us through giving at a leadership level. We are most grateful for their commitment to the future of the Madonna Foundation.

First Look for Charity Event Benefits the Madonna Foundation

The Madonna Foundation, as part of Franciscan Community Benefit Services Corporation, was blessed to be one of the 18 charities at First Look for Charity, the premier black tie event of the Chicago Auto Show held on February 7 at McCormick Place. We welcomed more than 600 guests and supporters in our private hospitality suite. Because of the generosity of our sponsors and donors, the Madonna Foundation can provide support to more young women in need.



Madonna Mile volunteer committee with current Madonna scholars.



Automated Business Designs President and MHS alumna '74, Terri Roeslmeier, poses with her colleague Mary and the Madonna scholars during the STEAM workshop.



Sr. Jeanne Marie and Sr. Doloria with the Madonna scholars and families at the Christmas caroling event.



Advisory Council member, Mary Margaret Brosnahan poses for a picture with Jennifer G. and Melanie S. during Career Day.



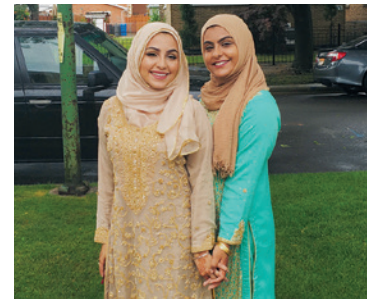
Sianez Family enjoying the evening at First Look for Charity.

Madonna Scholar Alumnae: Where Are They Now?

Alexa Mendoza (Trinity High School, 2018) a computer science and math major, just completed her sophomore year at St. Mary's of Notre Dame. She has been selected for a summer internship at the Naval Seas Systems Command Warfare Center in Crane, Indiana. At this third largest naval installation in the world, only 25% of those selected for internships for its elite engineering program are women. We are so proud of you, Alexa!

Justine Gama graduated from Josephinum Academy in 2012 and from the University of Illinois in 2017. Justine currently works at a psychiatric hospital in the Chicago area as a program therapist for the adult intensive outpatient program. She is spending the quarantine navigating telehealth and studying for her clinical exam. Thank you, Justine for taking care of your patients and good luck on your exam!

Alzahrha Almajid (Resurrection High School, 2016) will graduate from Loyola University in May with a BS in computer science. She has accepted a software engineering position at Avanade, a leading innovator of digital services. Says Alzahrha, "Being a scholar helped me get to where I am now and I encourage everyone to take full advantage of all the scholarship provides."



Madonna scholar alumnae, Alzahrha and Rahma A.



Madonna scholar alumna, Justine G.

Rahma Almajid (Resurrection High School, 2017) is completing her junior year at Northwestern University as a communication sciences and disorders major on the pre-med track. In the next year, she hopes to start her medical school application process and gain experience in the health field. She regularly volunteers and loves being part of the Madonna alumnae community.

Sarah Herbert (Resurrection College Prep, 2019) just completed her freshman year of college at Judson University. She struggled the first few weeks from homesickness, but focused on meeting people and making new friends. Being a collegiate athlete has taught her so much, pushing her to do things she never thought she could.



Madonna High School Alumnae and former teachers.

Reconnecting at the Alumnae Mass and Luncheon

The third annual Madonna High School Alumnae Mass and Luncheon hosted by the Madonna Foundation and the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago was held at Our Lady of Victory Chapel and Marian Hall in Lemont last fall. Over 50 guests gathered to reconnect with old friends, teachers and former students. All delighted in sharing stories and rekindling friendships!