Summer 2026

La Salle Academy NEWSLETTER
PHILADELPHIA

In the News...

The **2026 LSA Proud Golf Outing** is **Mon. Sept. 28, 2026** - Visit our GiveSmart page for information on becoming a Sponsor to help us have a Tee-rific outing!

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Congratulations to the LSA **Class of 2026**! Be proud of what you have accomplished and be open to all that lies ahead of you. Remember: you can do anything!

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Our LSA 2026 Art Show on May 20th and 21st was certainly *draw* dropping! The Art Show Gallery Walk was a wonderful way to see the bits and *master*pieces our students created throughout the school year.

Who and what do you think of when you think of *Philadelphia?*



LSA's Art Teacher, Mrs. Kitty Maley, and six students have been working alongside Patrick Vale, an artist originally from the UK and now living in Brooklyn, on a mural project set to be displayed on the concourse level of the Lits Building in Center City Philadelphia! A large portion of the mural stems from his tour of the city and the answers he received to the question - Who and what do you think of when you think of Philadelphia? To complete the mural, Patrick asked our students the same question. After the students sketch out what makes them think of Philadelphia, Patrick will add those designs, and **our students,** to the Lits Building Mural! What an exciting opportunity for LSA!





★★★★★ America 250 ★★★★★

As America celebrates 250 years, LSA will embrace that milestone during our Extended Year! A unique aspect of LSA's model is our Extended Year Summer Session which helps our students avoid the summer slide by providing additional classroom time with subjects such as Math, Reading, and Writing. Students also participate in field trips and work through a service project. Just as America 250 is challenging 2026 to be a year of service, we are challenging our students to find ways to connect America 250 ideals to their education and service projects.





Dear Friends of LSA,

With a full heart, I want to share that I have made the difficult decision to step down as President of La Salle Academy at the end of this school year. This choice was not made lightly and reflects the increasing needs of my family.

Serving the LSA Community has been an honor and a blessing.

I am proud of the upgrades and programs I have put into place for the school's long-term sustainability and benefit to the students. I remain fully committed to the La Salle Academy mission and will continue working diligently to ensure a smooth transition. The next President will be welcomed by a committed faculty and staff, an engaged Board of Trustees and the insights of our Strategic Planning process which concludes at the end of this Academic Year.

Serving LSA's students has truly been a blessing from God, something St. John Baptist de La Salle knew and taught. The tradition of education at La Salle Academy also is bolstered by the strong connection to the Sisters of St. Joseph. Together, we strive to achieve their noble mission: ***"To live and work that all people may be united with God and one another."***

These two beautiful charisms allow our students to develop their full potential and deepen their relationship with Christ. Thank you for your partnership, generosity, and belief in our students.

With sincere blessings,

Maria J. Walker
President

LA SALLE ACADEMY PROUD EST. 2003

Thank you Mrs. Walker!

La Salle Academy extends a BIG Thank You to Maria Walker for her time as President of La Salle Academy. Regardless of the project she was working on, she always remembered that LSA, and its staff, are here to *Power the Potential* of every student, family, and individual who walks through our doors. We hope her time at LSA has shown the power our mission and LSA Five Goals hold. May she carry our goals - Consistent, Motivated, Peaceful, Respectful, and Responsible- with her as she begins her new journey.

Letter From the Principal



Dear La Salle Academy Friends and Supporters,

As we near the end of the school year, I'm grateful for the energy and curiosity our students bring each day. This time of year is full of growth, and I'm excited to share that the students have been learning beyond the classroom through several educational field trips and programs.

Our 3rd and 4th graders explored agriculture and sustainability at Reed's Farm - sponsored by LSA Board member Michael Wade; 7th graders built teamwork and confidence during their Outward Bound adventure, and a visit to the Philadelphia Zoo deepened students' understanding of science and conservation. Our 8th graders also recently enjoyed their annual special trip to New York City— sponsored by LSA Board member James Danella and his wife, Mary Jo.

A new addition to LSA is our weekly Bible Study program, started by two 8th grade students. With more than 20 participants from grades 5–8, it has quickly become a valued space for reflection and spiritual growth. Service remains central to our mission and we were grateful to welcome students from Calvert Hall College High School, whose collaboration with our students strengthened our shared Lasallian commitment to serving others.

Our partnership with EcoPhilly continues to enrich our campus through hands-on gardening projects. Students across all grades are learning about sustainability, responsibility, and care for God's creation.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for helping us build a vibrant, faith-filled community where every student can thrive.

Sincerely,

Brigid McClelland

May God bless you and your families as we continue walking together in faith.



Agile Cat

A very special thank you to LSA Board Member and Agile Cat President and CEO, Peter Madden, Erin Needham, and the entire Agile Cat Team for hosting our Sixth Grade for a visit. The Team helped our students think outside the box in an environment with no limits on creativity as they learned about branding in a professional environment.



Reed's Farm

Thanks to LSA Board Member Mike Wade and his wife Sue, LSA's Third and Fourth Grades enjoyed a field trip to Reed's Farm. Students learned about the various flowers, plants, and vegetables growing on the farm, how to use some of them in everyday cooking, planted seeds, and spent some time with the animals. They even had a tasty farm fresh salad for lunch!

Eighth Grade Memories

Jaelynn Avelino

LITTLE FLOWER HIGH SCHOOL



My six years at La Salle Academy have been truly unforgettable. La Salle helped me transform into a more outgoing and confident person after being shy for so many years. As I grew older, I became comfortable with the La Salle community, especially with my classmates – many of whom I have known since third grade. My favorite memories are the Living Stations and seventh grade beach trip. These experiences were filled with laughter, brought us closer together, and showed our ability to take moments seriously. As I begin my journey at Little Flower High School I hope to participate in various activities, grow emotionally, embrace new experiences,and make new friends. One important lesson I will carry with me throughout life is the La Salle Academy Five Goals. I will deeply miss the friends I have made. Hopefully, the strong bonds we share will become lifelong friendships. As for now, I'm ready to start a new chapter in life.

Sebastian Carter

LA SALLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL



These last three years at La Salle Academy have shaped me into who I am today. I have made many memories with teachers and classmates. I also had many amazing experiences, such as the election for Student Council President and Trivia March Madness. Among the many things I learned, what sticks out was learning how to be a leader and role model for my classmates. My favorite memory of being at La Salle Academy was during the 7th grade beach trip where we swam in the ocean and I got buried in the sand. I am happy for the opportunity to go to La Salle College High School. I hope to bring out my full potential, experience new things, meet new people and expand my horizons. I will miss everything from this school. I want to thank Ms. McClelland, Mr. Barycki, and Mr. Plumber for supporting me during my time here. Not only did they contribute to my education and academic growth, they always made me feel like I belong here.

Novah Garcia

ROMAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



Attending La Salle Academy for the past six years helped make me into the loving and kind hearted person I am today. I have made many memories with teachers, classmates, and administrators. Coming here in the 3rd Grade was a big change for me because this was the first time I had gone to a Catholic school. I am so grateful to Ms. Diamond and Sr. Jeanne for inviting me to La Salle Academy and giving me a great education. I also want to thank Ms. Mulderig, Mr. B, the LSA benefactors and especially Mr. Shack. He molded me into the straight A student I am today and I will always love him for that. I will remember my teachers and classmates wherever I go, especially at Roman Catholic High School next year. One of my favorite memories at La Salle was performing the Living Stations in the Seventh Grade. It was 3-4 months of preparation and it all paid off the day before Easter Break. Another great memory was the seventh grade beach trip to Avalon Beach. It was really fun hanging out with Sr. Jeanne and Mr. Rossi after not seeing them for a long time and playing basketball with all the boys. I will always remember the fondness, devotion, and joy this school showed to me, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to go to La Salle Academy. I'm forever privileged to have come to this school, and I wish everyone will have the same experience.

Alani Gillard

ST. HUBERT HIGH SCHOOL



My six years at La Salle Academy were a good experience. In 3rd grade I was scared, wondering where my life was going to start, but it was also good to learn new things. 4th grade was a year with more experiences and more things to get used to. It was also a very exciting year with my friends and the staff. 5th grade was where it got harder with more work and learning but also fun and enjoyment. My 6th and 7th grade years were the most fun and enjoyable middle school years. It was hard in the beginning and smooth in the end. My favorite times at LSA were during 6th and 7th grades because of the trips, the laughs, the bonds and the learning experiences with teachers and staff. I want to thank all the staff and everyone who works and cares at LSA, my family for bringing me to La Salle Academy for a new learning environment, and the benefactors who help the students from 3rd to 8th grade. I want to give a special shoutout for my 8th grade year where the New York trip and graduation are the most important thing we are all focused on. I just want to mention that La Salle Academy needs a big shout out for how special they make things for the 8th grade and the others. I will miss my time here and I will also enjoy new steps going forward. Thank you.

Eighth Grade Memories

Lilyana Lopez

LITTLE FLOWER HIGH SCHOOL



During my six years at La Salle, I have made so many memories, such as the Living Stations when I played Mary or when we went to the beach and went swimming in the pool. My favorite memory is meeting everyone who has been there for me since day one - the staff, benefactors, and especially my friends who have such a big impact in my life that they have grown into my family. I have so many people to be grateful for, Sr.Jeanne, Ms. M, Mr. Shack, Mr. Williams, and especially my brother. Without them I probably would have not made it this far. La Salle has given me the skills and opportunities to make me the best I can be and live up to my goals. Next year I will be attending Little Flower High School where I am excited to explore sports like volleyball and basketball. These last few years have helped me realize that I'm going to miss this school and the memories. We will have to adjust to not seeing each other as we will be attending new schools and meeting new people. I wish the class of 2026 the best of luck as we begin our new journey

Alondra Lopez Leon

CRISTO REY HIGH SCHOOL



I want to start off by thanking God, family, friends, Board Members, and staff,especially Mr.B for helping me get into high school. Being at La Salle Academy has given me many opportunities to learn about myself which helped me become who I am today. One thing I love about LSA was the incredible friendships I made. During my three years here, I've had the privilege of meeting many amazing people. La Salle has taught me to be humble and care for others. Mr. Shack was always so helpful and caring and Ms. M, Mr. Dana, and Mr. Plumber were amazing teachers who helped me advance my education. Thanks to the benefactors, we were able to go on various memorable trips, including the 6th grade beach trip which was my favorite. I was able to get on a raft with Zaira and have a good time. I will be attending Cristo Rey High School next year. I am excited to partake in its program where I can work one day a week. I will take everything I learned from La Salle Academy and put it to use. I will always have La Salle Academy in my heart. Good luck Class of 2026!

Zaira McDonald

MERCY CAREER & TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL



I will never forget my 4 years at La Salle Academy. From the 5:00pm days, to the homework, to the July summer session – I've had countless opportunities to learn things that I never thought I would have. Something I will always remember and carry with me is the LSA Five Goals. I have made so many friends and memories during my time, such as when we went to the Philadelphia Zoo and had so much fun. I will also always remember when we took a class trip in the summer to Mr. and Mrs. Maginnis's beach house where I had the opportunity to ride on a raft with my friend Alondra. I would like to thank Sr. Jeanne, Mr.B, Mrs.M, and my family and friends for making my time at LSA memorable. Also my 3 years on Student Council have taught me a lot about responsibility. I will be taking everything I learned from LSA to Mercy Career and Technical High School where I will be pursuing a career in Health Occupation.

Seamus McGrath

MERCY CAREER & TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL



During my six years at La Salle, I learned how to follow the Five Goals and be my best self. One of my favorite memories was the 7th Grade beach trip because we got to swim and play basketball in the pool and on the beach. I'm excited to go to Mercy Vocational because I will be able to learn the building trades so I can enter into a career in construction. My advice to future La Salle Academy students is to not give up even when it gets hard. Listen, pay attention, and don't be afraid to ask for help. My favorite memories from La Salle are the Stations of the Cross and all the funny and serious moments I had with my 5 brothers/best friends. I want to thank my friends, Ms. M, the 5 Horsemen, and Mr. Shack for helping me overcome challenges and get through tough times.

Eighth Grade Memories

Jariel Mendez

FATHER JUDGE HIGH SCHOOL



My 6 years at La Salle Academy have been a challenging but joyful journey. One of my favorite memories was participating in the Living Stations in 7th grade. I got to play the role of Simon, who helped Jesus carry the cross. After the prayer service for the Living Stations was finished, I felt a deep sense of relief but also a great sense of fulfillment. It was all thanks to Mr.Shack's commitment and care to help my classmates and me make Stations of the Cross possible. I would also like to express my gratitude for Ms. M and Mr. Shack for helping push me past my limits. I also want to thank Mr. B for helping me gain admission to Father Judge High School. Without the help of LSA, these opportunities wouldn't have been possible for me.

Madison Roman

MERION MERCY ACADEMY



I've been at La Salle Academy for a year. During that time, the school has created a loving, fun community that gives everyone the chance to be better. From the very beginning, I have developed better awareness and new skills, from academics to personal growth. The staff, teachers, and benefactors have all helped me reach my highest potential, making me who I am today. Because of their support, I am able to attend my dream school, Merion Mercy Academy, with a significant scholarship for which my family and I are very grateful. Not only did the school shape my future, but my classmates and friends did as well. The people I met through LSA will always be some of my greatest memories. Even on the most boring days, my 8th-grade friends brought fun, with engaging conversations and lots of chaos. I will also always remember going to church for mass. Being here has made my faith stronger than ever. After struggling for a long time to get closer to God, I finally did and have been thriving ever since. It's hard to shout out just one or a few people because everyone at La Salle Academy has helped me and shown me how to live life.

Hope Soberal

COMMUNITY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



When I first came to La Salle Academy, it was a little hard adjusting to the new environment in a Catholic School. During my three years at La Salle Academy, I have gone through many ups and downs, but what helped me most were my friends and the LSA staff. Despite the challenges I faced, LSA opened up a new chapter in my life. I want to thank everyone who has always been there for me and stood behind me, including my family and friends. A really fun memory at LSA was the 7th grade beach trip. The whole experience was great, and I appreciate the hosts for welcoming us into their home. I am going to especially miss when we were all sitting in class cracking up to the point my body hurt. Something I learned here and won't forget is the LSA Five Goals. I appreciate Ms. M and Mr. Shack for always teaching me valuable life lessons. I will miss music class with Mr. Williams and his amazing vocals. I will carry everything that I learned to the Community Academy Charter School.

Namir Turner

ROMAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



My time at La Salle Academy has been one of the most important parts in my life from learning Social Studies to Financial Literacy. One of my favorite memories of La Salle was winning the back to back CYO Basketball Championships! Another memory was in 6th grade when I dropped my back-to-back points and they began calling me Mr. Back to Back. Next year I will be attending Roman Catholic High School, which I believe is the best fit for me. My time at La Salle was one of the best parts of my life, from the teachers to the staff. Some teachers have even been mother and father figures to me, such as Mr. Shack who was always there for me during my hardships. One of Mr. Shack's quotes is "to always love your enemies and be able to forgive them." I am really grateful for the opportunity La Salle has given me during my time here. I will miss the trips, Mr. Shack, Mrs. M, Mr. Morales, and other staff members like Mr. B, Mr. Rossi, and Coach Joe. Overall it was a good experience to share the same faith as my classmates.

Eighth Grade Memories

Demensio Villa

ROMAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



My six year experience at La Salle Academy has helped support me and shape me into the person I am today. I'd like to thank Mr. Shack for helping me grow into a better and more mature man, Mrs. Burns and Mrs. M for always supporting me through difficult times, and Mrs. Fynes for listening and sharing cherished moments together. I'll never forget that 6th grade field trip and our photo on the logo. But, my favorite memory of all is when we all were committed to giving everyone the best Living Stations that we could. The dedication we had and how hard we worked together is something that cannot be matched. The connections La Salle Academy provided me have truly been a blessing, especially those beautiful masses at St. Michael's Church. Lastly, I want to thank Mr. Morales for being one of the most kindhearted and caring people I know. He truly is a person to always thank and have a good talk with. My final months at LSA will give me many memories and thoughts to carry on throughout my next steps in life. I am taking my next journey to Roman Catholic High School and I want to pursue their awesome debate club. I will never forget the honor this school has shown me. I lastly want to wish the class of 26' the best of luck in the next chapter in their lives.



Mr. Dana's 2025-2026 Reflection

The LSA motto for the school year was a take on "Play Like A Champion." I can happily report that 8th graders have studied, learned, participated, read, written, calculated, played, jumped, supported, contributed, helped, encouraged, mentored, laughed, welcomed, and prayed like Champions this year. I knew it was a good group from the beginning of the year, when they spontaneously started playing "campfire" games during homework club one September afternoon. And then November's trip to Outward Bound gave them the opportunity to connect to the real outdoors and share laughs and challenges as they pushed each other to test their limits. Toward the end of the year, the class read *The Giver* and *The Outsiders*, two books which they found relatable in vastly different ways. This class will absolutely flourish as they matriculate to Little Flower, Community, Roman Catholic, La Salle College High School, Merion Mercy, Cristo Rey, Father Judge, St. Hubert, and Mercy Tech.





A Whole New World

Our soon-to-be graduates traveled on their own type of magic carpet to New York City to see the beauty and wonder of NYC and to see *Aladdin* come to life on stage! In addition to seeing a matinee performance, our eighth grade visited St. Patrick's Cathedral and Times Square, had lunch in Bryant Park, explored the city and enjoyed a delicious dinner at Carmine's Restaurant. A BIG thank you to Jim and Mary Jo Danella and Danella Companies for making this trip possible. Our wish for the LSA Class of 2026 is for them to enjoy every moment, embrace every opportunity, and trust that LSA will always be here to support them as they enter *"A Whole New World."*



Philadelphia Zoo

We aren't *lion*, LSA's Third, Fourth, and Fifth Graders had a fun time visiting the Philadelphia Zoo! From giraffes, lions and monkeys to turtles, tarantulas, and snakes our students got to see and learn about the animals that roam our Earth. Currently on display at the Zoo are Zootopiaries, a combination of art, plants, and animals. What an exciting way to see the natural world come alive in a different way. Finally, they stopped by The Barnyard at KidZooU to spend time with some goats and sheep!





Throughout the school year, our students have completed a variety of Art Projects. From sketching to painting to paper mache to clay work and more, our students let their artistic abilities shine! Although each class is assigned a specific project and general guidelines, the creativity and imagination of students is evident by the unique pieces that emerge from the Art Room. LSA students are ink-redibly talented! Thank you to the incredible creativity of our Art Teacher, Kitty Maley!



La Salle Academy is grateful for our connection to **Mount Saint Joseph Academy**. Recently, LSA's Sixth Grade participated in Creative Writing with a few Mount students. Not only does creative writing help students develop self-expression and imagination, it also builds innovative thinking and cognitive skills. Having Mount students join in is a wonderful opportunity for our students to connect with and learn from those outside their classroom.



LSA is participating in **Eco Philly**, a special program of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to activate the lessons of Pope Francis' Laudato Si. Our students are learning how to care for the planet through enacting preservation of resources, recycling, and sustainability. A few of the projects have included gardening, creating terrariums, and studying how resources can be used in multiple ways.

Diamonds are Forever!




Thanks to the generosity of Irene and Art Rodgers and friends, LSA students had a jewelry pop-up shop just in time for Mother's Day. We asked our students to think about a special woman in their life - whether that is their mother, grandmother, aunt, or sister - and choose something they think she would love. Mr. and Mrs. Rodgers helped us remember that life is too short to not sparkle with a new necklace, bracelet or pair of earrings! Your pop-up shop helped create a lasting memory that their special women can hold onto for a lifetime. Thank you for helping our LSA students make sure the special women in their lives are shining bright this Mother's Day and everyday.





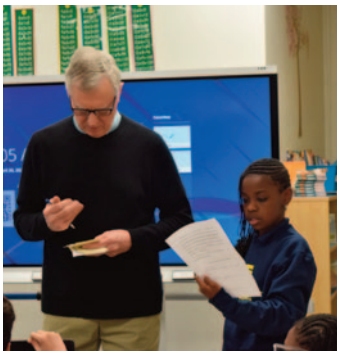

Financial Literacy

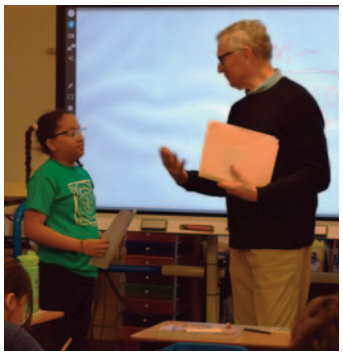





This year our Eighth Grade is learning a valuable life skill, Financial Literacy. Through Junior Achievement, our students are gaining knowledge on best practices for how to make informed financial decisions. Volunteer, John Hopkins, touches on key aspects of financial literacy such as budgeting, saving, credit scores and responsible spending habits so that they can become good stewards of their finances. Each lesson includes a handout that highlights key terms, big topic ideas from the session and an activity to help students apply the concepts to a real life scenario. Thank you, Mr. Hopkins for teaching our eighth graders the basics of financial literacy and preparing them to navigate our ever-changing world.









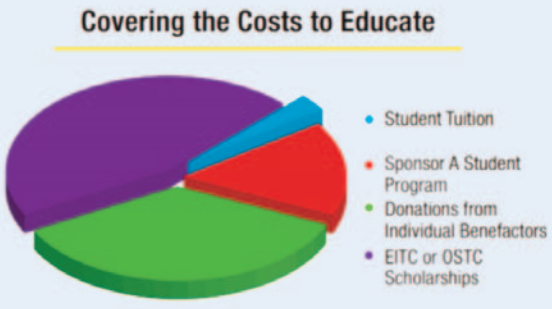
Public Speaking

Thanks to John Kearney, a member of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps, every LSA student partakes in a Public Speaking course. Under his guidance, students practice vital skills such as critical thinking, organization of thought, posture, eye contact, and active listening. With each speech, students are building confidence in their ability to speak in front of a group and receive feedback on their presentation. This month's topic for the Third to Fifth Grades centered on running for Student Council or President of LSA and what they would do to make our school better. Creative thinking was certainly in play as they suggested adding clubs such as gaming or gardening, chill days that include movies, pizza, and ice cream, more field trips, and even hosting a Science Fair and Spelling Bee. Thank you, Mr. Kearney for helping LSA learn such an important life skill!



Thank you to each company and individual that supports La Salle Academy and its students through these state tuition and scholarship programs!

These programs allow more students to experience the benefits of LSA's private Catholic education, along with the many extracurricular and supplemental activities we offer.



For more information, contact Megan G. Thomson at mgthomson@lasalleacademy.net or at 215-739-5804.

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