



NATIONAL SPONSORSHIP AND NETWORK OFFICE

Network Notes

From the Desk of Dr. Laura Koehl

*God says: I know the plans, I have in mind for you, plans for peace and not disaster.
I reserve a future full of hope for you.
Jeremiah 29:11*

Greetings colleagues, sisters and friends,

This newsletter is dedicated to the Sisters of Notre Dame as they celebrate the 175th anniversary of their founding and their legacy of spreading God's Goodness and Provident Care across the globe. In keeping with that legacy, our spring newsletter highlights the many mission-centered good works in our SND USA network of ministries acknowledging the dedicated board members, leaders, staff, and other stakeholders engaged in advancing the SND mission. We celebrate "mission accomplished" moments as well as new beginnings where the mission continues.

We are ever blessed with the charism and legacy of the Sisters of Notre Dame at the center of these stories we share and ever grateful for the many lay people on our boards and in our ministries who have embraced that charism and legacy and continue faithfully to propel it forward.

And in all of this, we can see and give thanks for a "future full of hope!"

Happy 175th anniversary dear sisters!

Gratefully,

Laura Koehl, Ed.D.



Honoring Bruce Jarosz



Bruce Jarosz was honored for his outstanding commitment to the SND mission at the annual "Partners in Mission" Mass and luncheon in Chardon, OH on April 27. A servant leader, Bruce has generously given years of active leadership on boards or committees at St. John Vianney Parish, Lake Catholic High School, John Carroll University, and Saints Robert and William Elementary School. Bruce chaired the Notre Dame Cathedral Latin (Chardon, OH) Board of Directors for eight years and is presently the Board Chair of the National Ministry Corporation.

Spring 2025

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Congratulations to SND National Network Award Recipients



The SND National Network Awards program recognizes and celebrates the outstanding contributions of employees and volunteers in the SND Network for witness to the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Congratulations to this year's recipients!

Transformative Leadership Award

Recognizes individuals who are catalysts for growth; inspire hearts; and transform lives of those with whom they minister.

Michelle Bonar, Director of Senior Living, St. Charles Community, Covington, KY
Sr. Paul Ann Hanneken, Retired Teacher/Administrator, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY
Dr. Jacqueline Hoynes, President, Notre Dame Schools, Chardon, OH
Sr. Rachel Nerone, Retired Teacher/Administrator, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY
Lilliam Paetzold, Head of School, Notre Dame Academy Schools, Los Angeles, CA

Gospel Witness Award

Recognizes those who reflect and nurture the Notre Dame charism, spirit and mission within their professional communities and among all they minister.

Katie Caccavari, Director of Enrollment, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY
Mary Beth Potthoff, Second Grade Teacher, St. John's Elementary School, Delphos, OH
Katie Sague, Vice Principal, Our Lady of Victory School, Washington, D.C.
Jason Wojnicz, Chief Strategy Officer, Julie Billiart Schools, Lyndhurst, OH

Bernard Overberg "Teacher of Teachers" Award

Recognizes educators that demonstrate exceptional, inspirational impact on the formation and professional learning of teachers.

Lara Heidrich, Social Studies Teacher/Department Chair, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY
Patrick Koenig, Intervention Specialist, Julie Billiart School, Lyndhurst, OH

Congratulations to **Kim Grilliot**, President of **Notre Dame Academy** (Toledo, OH) for being honored as one of eight extraordinary women during the YWCA of Northwest Ohio's 30th annual Milestones Awards in 2025. Kim was recognized for her contributions to the field of education, recognizing her compassion and commitment to providing a learning environment that fosters respect, creativity and curiosity.



Kim has been a servant leader in education for her entire 40 plus year career. She has served at NDA for the past 21 years, as NDA's first lay Vice Principal and Principal and as the first lay President. She implemented the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma Program -- the only one in Northwest Ohio; started the Junior academy for grades 7-8; implemented and secured funding for a 1:1 iPad program; and partners with universities to give students more opportunities to earn college credits.

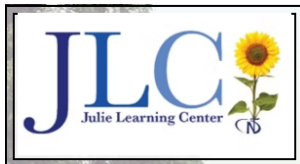
CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE



Notre Dame Urban Education Center (Covington, KY) was awarded a \$50,000 challenge grant from the Butler Foundation to support its mission of providing educational enrichment and support services to children in Covington and the surrounding communities. Every dollar donated by June 30, 2025 will be matched by the Butler Foundation up to \$50,000 ensuring that NDUEC can continue preparing young learners for kindergarten and helping K-8 students succeed in area public and parochial schools.

Congratulations to **Lial Catholic School** (Whitehouse, OH) teacher **Jenny Chirico**, pictured top right, on receiving a Golden Apple award from the Diocese of Toledo, and **Our Lady of Victory School** (Washington, D.C.) teacher Shelly Taguchi, pictured bottom right, on receiving a Golden Apple award from the Diocese of Washington. This award honors teachers who go above and beyond in their dedication, passion for education, and the positive impact they make on students' lives.

Jenny was a recipient of the 2023 Bernard Overberg "Teacher of Teachers" National Network Award.



Congratulations to **Julie Learning Center** (Covington, KY) for being nominated for the LINK nky Readers' Choice 2025 Awards for Best Daycare Center.



St. Charles Community, (Covington, KY) celebrated *National Caregivers Day* with their dedicated caregivers. National Caregivers Day is celebrated on the third Friday in February to pay tribute to the people who provide care and support to others.

Congratulations to Sr. Marla Monahan, SND for being selected as the 2025 Helen Carroll Champion of Education Honoree. The Helen Carroll Champion of Education award recognizes a leader for her impact and dedication to education in the northern Kentucky community.

Each year the NKY Chamber Women's Initiative Outstanding Women of Northern Kentucky Awards honors women who exemplify notable achievement, outstanding service in their professions or to the Northern Kentucky community, and the qualities of personal integrity, perseverance, and leadership.



Please share excellence in your ministry by contacting us at nsno@sndusa.org.

TRANSITIONS



The Sisters of Notre Dame National Ministry Corporation Board of Directors has established the **SND Eastern Kentucky Foundation** (Morehead, KY) to support health and wellness, education and career development; and quality of life in eastern Kentucky continuing the SND legacy of service to the region for the past 60 years. Contributions made to support UK St. Claire, including gifts to accounts held by the former St. Claire Foundation, as well as donations to support the priorities of the new organization, will be received and administered through the SND EKY Foundation. The first grand application cycle opens July 1, 2025.

Mindy Highley has been named as the first Chief Executive Officer of the SND EKY Foundation. Mindy brings a wealth of experience in nonprofit leadership, community engagement, and regional programming as well as a passion for rural communities. Highley will oversee the strategic direction of the foundation, ensuring the effective execution of its programs, securing resources, and advancing its mission to foster sustainable development and improve the lives of Eastern Kentucky residents.



Notre Dame Academy (Park Hills, KY) announces the appointment of Lauren Hitron as president of Notre Dame Academy, effective July 1, 2025. Lauren currently serves as the founding director of the Jean Frazier Leadership Institute at Sacred Heart Schools in Louisville, KY. She brings nearly 20 years of experience in Catholic, all-girls education and has consistently demonstrated vision leadership in enrollment management, program development, and strategic mission alignment. Her work has fostered impactful community partnerships, expanded donor engagement, and empowered students and faculty through a commitment to faith-based formation and excellence.

Lauren is an Ursuline Associate and currently completing a master's degree in organizational leadership with a concentration in servant leadership from Gonzaga University. Her commitment to Catholic education is deeply personal, rooted in her belief in the transformative power of faith-filled learning environments for young women. "I have always been impressed with Notre Dame Academy's reputation of academic excellence nurtured in a strong, Catholic community rooted in the charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame," she said. "I am inspired by the school's vision of transformative women leaders embracing God's goodness in the world, and I look forward to working with the Board of Directors, faculty, staff, and the NDA community to build upon the firm foundation laid by the Sisters of Notre Dame more than a century ago."

Julie Billiard Schools will launch a unique new program called Beginnergarten at the JB Brecksville campus in the 2025-26 academic year. Designed as a readiness program to bridge preschool to kindergarten, Beginnergarten offers a full day of learning and support, and focuses on building essential skills preparing students to successfully transition to a JB kindergarten classroom or one that best fits their needs.



TRANSITIONS

St. Joseph Heights in Covington, KY will officially close this summer. The convent, built in 1926, has been the home of the Sisters of Notre Dame for nearly a century. While many grieve the loss of this historic and spirit filled building, we also celebrate the more than 40 churches and organizations that are recipients of so many of its blessed contents. To see the list of recipients, visit "The Mission Carries On" on the SND USA website at: <https://sndusa.org/sndstcharlesstatement/>

And we look to a promising future as St. Charles Community will expand its SND mission to serve those in need of senior living care in the northern Kentucky region. "Since our founding by the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1961, the St. Charles Community has been a leader in senior care in Northern Kentucky," said Nicole Smith, Chief Executive Officer of St. Charles Community. "Our mission calls us to care for the whole person -- body, mind and spirit -- with professional competency, respect, and deep devotion to the healing ministry of Jesus. We believe that this expansion will enable us to reach more seniors in desperate need of compassionate care and services, while honoring and preserving the legacy of the Sisters of Notre Dame in this region," she continued.



With the closing of St. Joseph Heights, **Julie Learning Center Preschool** will relocate to St. Agnes School, a Sisters of Notre Dame affiliated school located in Ft. Wright, KY, this fall and looks forward to a promising future.

We give thanks and appreciation to the following board chairs who will complete their leadership terms this year. These individuals have graciously and faithfully served the mission of their ministries.

Julie Tapke Dusing, Julie Learning Center, Covington, KY

Dan Rudski, Lial Catholic School, Whitehouse, OH

Jason Lenihan, Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, KY

Kathy Korducki, Notre Dame Academy, Toledo, OH

Three sisters will complete their board terms this year, and we are especially grateful to each of them for their service to their ministry and the constant example they provide of God's love and provident care through their board service.

Sr. Patricia Tyree, Julie Learning Center, Covington, KY

Sr. Judine Lambert, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY

Sr. Nancy Vance, Notre Dame Academy, Toledo, OH



CELEBRATING

This year, the Sisters of Notre Dame celebrate 175 years since Sisters Maria Aloysia and Maria Ignatia answered God's call to serve in Coesfeld, Germany. Since 1850, the congregation's ability to adapt to changing circumstances around the world has been essential to its success and longevity. Sisters, yesterday and today, bring service, education, and compassion to whoever and wherever they minister, making a lasting impact on lives everywhere. Many schools celebrated the 175th anniversary by providing 175 service hours, donations, cards and letters, and even acts of kindness.

Canned Goods Donations to "Stuff the Truck"



Lial Catholic School (Whitehouse, OH) collected 175 canned goods to donate to the Toledo SeaGate Food Bank in collaboration with the Sisters of Notre Dame, who have collaborated on food drives to benefit the Toledo SeaGate Food Bank through "Stuff the Truck" event for the last few years. The food drive took place during Catholic Sisters Week.

Notre Dame Academy in Toledo also participated in the "Stuff the Truck" event with a goal of collecting 175 cans. Students also helped with shifts during the canned food drop off.

Donations to Local Causes

Maria Early Learning Center (Toledo, OH) is collecting 175 stainless steel water bottles for Isaiah 117 House, which is currently raising money to build a home in the Toledo area. Isaiah 177 House is a national organization that reduces trauma on the day children are removed from their home and provides physical and emotional support in a safe and loving home as the children await placement in a foster home. In addition to collecting water bottles, Maria Early Learning Center will include units in the curriculum on the importance of clean and accessible water and efforts by the SNDs to provide safe and clean water across the globe.



Notre Dame Academy Schools (Los Angeles, CA) put together 175 hygiene kits for West LA Homeless, an organization that serves those experiencing homelessness directly in their area.

Putting a Smile on Sisters' Faces

Notre Dame Schools (Chardon, OH) put smiles on the faces of sisters in the Health Care Center. The students and staff on both the high school and middle/elementary school campuses sent personal letters and cards to those sisters. In addition, Dr. Jacqueline Hoynes recognized the sisters in a column about them in an edition of *Seasons* magazine, which is their quarterly publication for alumni.

Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School in Chardon, OH held a prayer service to celebrate 175 years and invited the sisters to attend.



SND 175 YEARS



Acts of Kindness, Prayer and Almsgiving

Notre Dame Academy (Park Hills, KY) challenged their students to complete 175 Acts of Kindness during the Lenten Season in honor of the Sisters of Notre Dame. This was introduced to the students during the *Women Making a Difference Day* service fair. On that day, all of the students took part in their first act of kindness by making a spring card that was delivered to residents at the local Senior Living Facilities, including the Sisters living on the 4th floor of the school and at St. Charles Community..



Julie Billiard School in Lyndhurst challenged students to complete 175 acts of kindness by Holy Thursday. The acts of kindness were tracked by having teachers and students complete a paper slip and enter it into a large bucket in their Chapel. The school also focused on the Stations of the Cross during Holy Week to encourage students and teachers to visit the Chapel and the Stations of the Cross. Third grade students celebrate their completion of their acts of kindness at left.

Notre Dame Cathedral Latin (Chardon, OH) performed 175 acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving and created a wall for students to record their acts. In addition, the school partnered with the local Vincent de Paul Society that is working on getting beds for children. The students raised \$1,750 to pay for pillows and sheets. Choir students also joined the SND choir in recording a song written to celebrate the 175th anniversary.



Tree Planting

Our Lady of Victory School (Washington, D.C.) welcomed nine new trees to the MacArthur Boulevard hillside. The new trees include four hornbeams, three willow oak, a linden, and a red cedar. One willow oak was dedicated to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Sr. Mary Frances Taymans, SND, stopped by to see the tree and visit with her 8th grade friends who helped with her presentation on trees during Catholic Schools Week. These trees are species native to the region and have been selected for their hardiness and ability to thrive in urban environments. They will provide shade, safeguard against erosion, and, importantly, add more natural beauty to OLV's grounds.



All SND sponsored ministries and affiliated schools were asked to consider planting a tree on their property to mark the 175th anniversary. The goal is to plant 175 trees worldwide while beautifying our world.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK



Students at **Notre Dame Academy** (Toledo, OH) enjoyed faith, fellowship and sweet moments as they snacked with the sisters in celebration of Catholic Schools Week.

School parents Mr. and Mrs. Fineske discussed faith and the vocation of marriage with students at **Lial Catholic School** (Whitehouse, OH).



Notre Dame Academy (Park Hills, KY) concluded Catholic Schools Week by expressing gratitude to parents for choosing NDA. The parents' commitment to Catholic education allows NDA to cultivate an environment where girls thrive and become competent, compassionate, and purposeful leaders who will change the world for the better.

The entire **Notre Dame Academy Schools** (Los Angeles, CA) community from TK through 12th grade came together for a beautiful Mass in honor of Catholic Schools Week. This sacred tradition united them in faith, gratitude, and celebration of their mission as a Catholic School in Los Angeles. As they commemorate 75 years of excellence at the high school and 78 years at the elementary school this year, the community gave thanks for the strong foundation built by the Sisters of Notre Dame and all who have shaped this journey.



Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School (Chardon, OH) gave special thanks to the Notre Dame Parents Association for hosting fun events for students and staff during Catholic Schools Week, including a magician, Chick-Fil-A lunch, snow cones, and a special teacher appreciation lunch.

CATHOLIC SISTERS WEEK

Catholic Sisters Week is held annually every March 8-14 to shine a light on the spirituality, mission, and community building of women religious.



SND Eastern KY Foundation (Morehead, KY) celebrated the week by surprising the Morehead sisters with their favorite cookies from a local bakery, a gift basket, and a gift card to view *The Last Supper* movie with popcorn and a drink included. They also highlighted sisters on their foundation board, including Sisters Marla Monahan, Joell Overman and Judine Lambert as well as Sisters Marge Mouch (pictured left) and Janet Smith on social media posts every day throughout the week.

Lial Catholic School (Whitehouse, OH) honored sisters for their vision and commitment to Lial as well as their love, prayers, and tireless devotion. The photo on the right includes all the past SND principals of the school, including Sr. Mary Corneille, Sr. Mary Cyrilla, Sr. Mary Jesse, Sr. Kathleen Marie (formerly Mary Madelen), Sr. Margaret Mary and Sr. Patricia Marie.



Notre Dame Academy (Toledo, OH) celebrated with a "Blessed Breakfast" where students gathered with the Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Mercy of Alma, and Franciscan Sisters of Sylvania. It was a wonderful opportunity for the girls to connect with these inspiring women over breakfast and discuss the beauty of religious

Julie Billiard School students of all faith traditions are welcome to participate in the activities of Catholic Schools Week. The Schools aim to turn each day into a celebration with a multitude of fun activities, including dress down days, book fairs, pizza lunches and ice cream treats, Catholic saint bingo, service projects such as a donation drive for a local animal shelter, a school-wide art project, and even a round of bowling in the school gym. Julie Billiard Schools is proud to be a network of Catholic schools and participate in a tradition as important as Catholic Schools Week.



MISSION MOMENTS



2025 Charism Experience

"God gives us the gift and mission to proclaim to others God's overwhelming goodness and provident care."

SND Constitutions, Article 6

As Sr. Lisa Novak reflects on the 2025 Charism Experience, these words from the SND Rule of Life became more meaningful to her. The understanding of these words was very evident in the way the participants interacted with each other and with the Sisters of Notre Dame, especially during the traditional Coffee with the Sisters.

What trust God has in us to give us this gift and mission! From their discussions and suggestions for "Going Forward" as they return to their respective ministries, these women and men were stating, "YES, let's DO this! Better yet, let's BE this for others!" What better way to say THANKS to a good and caring God for such a gift and mission of which they along with the sisters have come to realize what valued partners they are today and into the future!

Fifteen Charism Experience participants came from eight schools and the Eastern KY Foundation for an opportunity to share in presentations, discussions and prayers to gain a deeper understanding of the history, mission, and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Campus Ministry at **Notre Dame Cathedral Latin** (Chardon, OH) completed their final Kairos retreat at Camp Whitewood this year. Students and faculty took time away from the classroom to reflect on their relationship with God and their relationship with each other.



Seniors at **Notre Dame Academy** (Park Hills, KY) stepped away from the classroom in March to embrace a time of reflection and faith at the annual Senior Mission Retreat. This retreat is a special opportunity for students to grow spiritually, strengthen their bonds with one another, and make a meaningful impact reflecting on the mission of Notre Dame Academy. They were blessed to worship in the chapel at St. Joseph Heights.

ANNIVERSARIES



Notre Dame Academy (Los Angeles, CA) celebrated the annual *Making a Difference Gala* with a sold-out crowd that came together in support of direct and immediate tuition assistance for future generations of NDA young women.

The evening began with a heartfelt performance by the cast of *Annie*, showcasing a scene from their spring musical. President and Head of School, Lillian Paetzold, opened the evening with a touching dedication and a special pinning ceremony honoring the school's founders, the Sisters of Notre Dame. The inaugural live action was a major hit, and attendees were deeply moved by the words of 2018 alumna, Emily Pina, who reminded the crowd that an NDA education is more than just four years -- it is a gift that lasts a lifetime. Sister Gina Marie Blunck introduced and presented the St. Julie Billiart Award to this year's honoree, Christine Cervanek '78. Christine gave a beautiful speech, dedicating her award to her family, lifelong NDA friends, and the incredible individuals she has worked with to end human trafficking.

Notre Dame Academy (Toledo, OH) is celebrating their 120th anniversary year, marked by several events including the annual *Mad for Plaid* celebration of excellence, the successful completion of the "Empowering Women Transforming Lives" campaign, the groundbreaking for their new campus transformation plan, and celebrating the 150th anniversary of the SNDs in the United States.

The academy was also recognized as the best Catholic High School in the Toledo area by Niche. This accomplishment would not be possible without the relentless efforts of students, teachers, staff and engaged and supportive community. Niche maintains in-depth profiles on every school and college in America and serves as a powerful search tool to help students and families find and enroll in the right school for them.



Julie Billiart Schools (OH) celebrated their 70th anniversary at their annual Gala held at the new Brecksville, Ohio campus in September. The celebration included a very moving testimonial by a past parent who shared how much hope Julie Billiart has brought to their family in the good work they do with their students.

Coming Up!

6/8-12

Rural HealthCare Student
Experience

Morehead, KY

9/3-5

NMC Board Retreat

Chardon, OH

10/1

Sisters of Notre Dame
Foundation Day

10/28-30

Sponsored Ministry Leadership
Gathering

Chardon, OH

1/25-31

Catholic Schools Week

3/8-14

Catholic Sisters Week

3/25-27

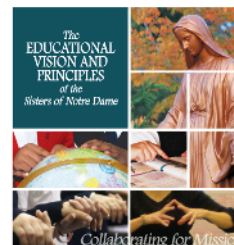
Charism Experience

Chardon, OH

Resources

Get ready for the 2025-26 school year with Foundation Day bookmarks, "great SND story" stickers, perpetual calendars and *The Educational Vision and Principles* booklets.

Visit the National Sponsorship and Network Office website at <https://nsno.sndusa.org/resources/> to view the selections and place your order.



A Prayer to Begin Summer

*For more light in the day, we thank you,
For gentle mornings, we thank you,
For nighttime conversations, we thank you,
For friends and family, we thank you,
For gardens and all manner of creatures, we thank you.
Help us, Creator and lover of our souls.
Help us love this earth.
Help us dwell wholeheartedly in our lives this day.
Help us pray as we walk, work, play, rest, and create.*

Amen



Visit the NSNO website at <https://nsno.sndusa.org> for more resources and information or contact the staff at:

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