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INSIDE

- KINDERGARTEN READINESS PROGRAM
- MEET OUR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TEAM
- COMMITTED TO THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY: CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATES
- ST. MICHAEL'S GENERATIONAL IMPACT

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Invest in the first
five years of a child's life
with your year-end gift.

Inside or online!

OUR MISSION

St. Michael's is dedicated to building a strong foundations for all children in the first five years of life and to supporting families as their educational journey begins. We foster a safe, nurturing, inclusive environment and seek the highest standards in our practice, curriculum, and professionals.

We are committed to the community we serve and believe a sense of community is a core strength for children, families, and educators.

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A ST. MICHAEL'S EXPERIENCE MEANS...



A DELAWARE STARS 5-STAR LEVEL CENTER

The highest level of quality for an early care and education center as rated by the state's Department of Education



STRONG FAMILY-SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Year-round operations to support working families. Resources to strengthen family bonds and guidance in choosing the right elementary school



NURTURING AND STIMULATING ENVIRONMENTS

Low student-teacher ratios for individualized teaching, learning through play, and a trauma-aware approach that includes social and emotional wellness programs



COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Striving to hire and retain qualified staff and support teachers in furthering their education and skills



A HISTORY OF SERVICE

132 years of serving Wilmington families and preparing children for success in kindergarten

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StMichaelsSchoolAndNursery



WHAT'S INSIDE

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES

page 2

MEET OUR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TEAM

page 2

GENERATIONAL IMPACT

page 3

FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENT FROM OUR DIRECTOR

page 3



the school

SCOOP

WINTER 2022-23

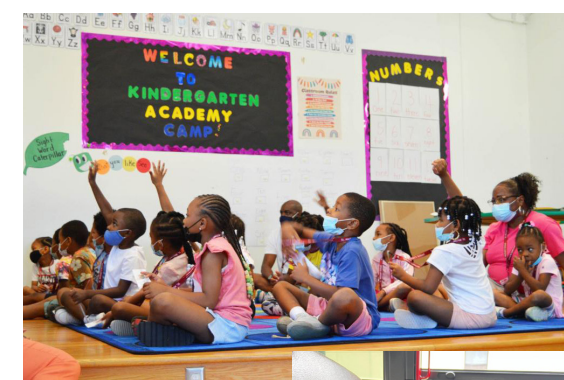
Summer and Fall Happenings

Pilot Program Helps Pre-Schoolers Successfully Transition to Kindergarten

This past summer, St. Michael's piloted our first successful Kindergarten Readiness Program, also known as K Camp, to prepare our Pre-K students for a successful transition to kindergarten. We combined our Pre-K classrooms for structured learning activities, meal times and fun early literacy and STEAM-themed field trips.

Summer Camp days included:

- Mock kindergarten classes getting children ready for larger classes and new routines
- Walking trips to the Wilmington Public Library and Reading on Rodney Square
- Language and Literacy, Math, Science, Arts, Movement and Music activities
- A field trip to Hagley Museum to learn about Summer in Industrial America
- An elementary school tour, highlighting several schools our children moved on to in the fall
- Building social and emotional skills that are so important for positive interaction with new peers
- A free experience to participants and funded entirely by St. Michael's. Plans are to continue K Camp every summer!



Outdoor Classroom Expands Curriculum

Thanks to funding through the Delaware Community Needs Grant opportunity, a program under the COVID-19 Strategic Response Fund at the Delaware Community Foundation, St. Michael's added a beautiful outdoor classroom. This summer and fall, we used the space



to teach children to plant sunflower gardens, observe the busy lives of ants in our ant farm and have hands-on activities with our wiggly worm friends, just to name a few. Our Outdoor Classroom Curriculum Coordinators create age appropriate lessons so all children can be engaged in outdoor learning year-round.

The *Let's Go Outside* grant from the University of DE also allowed our teachers and administrators to receive several hours of professional development training. We are now a certified outdoor learning space facility!



Planning Continues for Launch of Capital Campaign

A big thank you to Linda and Steve Boyden for hosting a lovely evening at their home in October introducing updates and information about St. Michael's capital campaign to a group of community members. Event hosts also included Bill Dugdale and Sydney Van Dyke, Dr. Patrice Gilliam-Johnson, Josh and Cynthia Martin, Wil and Susan Sherk and Cal and Ann Wick. *Thank you!*



The campaign, **Committed to the Future of our Community: St. Michael's Renovation and Expansion Project**, seeks to raise a total of \$6.4 million for critically needed renovations and upgrades to our aging buildings and to replace systems that are beyond their life expectancy. It also includes new building additions to provide for increased enrollment and curriculum as well as expanded services to the East Side community.

Renovations are underway and will continue through November 2023, with the project being completed in phases so services to families can continue throughout the renovations. To date, about \$2.8 million has been raised through foundations, government and individuals.

We're excited to share the campaign logo above! Stay tuned for more info on the many ways you can get involved in this transformative project. *Contact us for a hard hat tour!*



Meet Our Family Engagement Team

Ashlinn Lorenzana, Community & Family Outreach Coordinator

As Community and Family Outreach Coordinator, Ashlinn (pictured left below) is often the first contact for families when they are exploring enrollment of their child. Her responsibilities include providing onboarding procedures, family orientations, school tours and general



school information, coordinating the Family Resource Room and referring families to community and state resources.

A St. Michael's alum and parent of two girls who currently attend the school,

Ashlinn is a strong ambassador for families. While pursuing her Masters in Human Services, she started her career at St. Michael's as an intern working with two year olds before becoming an employee and then transitioning into administration in her current role.

Ashlinn was instrumental in helping to reconfigure the enrollment pattern of St. Michaels when the school expanded its Infant and Toddler Program several years ago to better meet the city's need for more infant programs. Families who enroll their infants often remain with us through their child's foundational first five years of life. As our Pre-K families prepare to transition to kindergarten, Ashlinn helps them navigate Delaware's school choice program, working to simplify what can often be an overwhelming process for parents. Since becoming a parent, Ashlinn says her desire to help all families access a quality early education for their children has strengthened.

Erica Antoine, Family Support Specialist

As the Family Support Specialist, Erica meets with families after they have completed a Family Needs Assessment and provides information about local support services and resources to address their social determinants of health. Erica makes it her mission to build trust with families over time in order to strengthen the entire family unit. She believes that the family is their child's first teacher and that children need strong support systems and stability to thrive. She works to ensure that families have the tools they need to provide this support and consistency for their children.

Originally from New York, Erica followed her interest in early childhood education to St. Michael's. She has been with the school for two years, starting as a Pre-K teacher, then the Pre-School department head before transitioning to her current role. Already, she has implemented two new initiatives for our Pre-K students: Kindergarten Academy Camp, a summer program to prepare children for a successful transition to kindergarten and a Pre-School Book Club to foster a love of books and early reading competency.



St. Michael's enjoyed a visit from State Senator Elizabeth "Tizzy" Lockman and her new baby Jack this past fall. Pictured above L to R: Daykia Hunter-McNight, Legislative Assistant to Sen. Lockman; Lucinda Ross; Senator Lockman; and Board Member Susan Sherk.

Committed to the Future of Our Community

A Foundational Statement from Our Executive Director on St. Michael's Renovation and Expansion Project

Since 1890, St. Michael's has been caring for Wilmington's youngest citizens, often those in most need of services and care. It has gone through many iterations - from daily care for the children of tannery workers to providing respite care for children whose parents were recuperating from tuberculosis. It has served as an orphanage and an adoption agency. In the 1930's, it was known as St. Michael's Hospital for Colored Babies and was the only facility in Wilmington where families of color could find medical care for their children. With the construction of its purpose-built early childhood center in 1967, St. Michael's joined others in the field of early education to enrich the daily educational experiences of the children and to ready them for kindergarten and a successful entry into formal education. In the last decade, it has expanded the Infant and Toddler programs to answer not only the needs of working families but also to build a strong community to benefit families with various means of support. Our families often need help as they navigate social services, developmental and medical



issues of their children, kindergarten choice and registration, and various other challenges which call for advocacy and knowledge of systems. As St. Michael's looks at its next iteration and the needs of the present population, commitment to young families' needs

becomes intertwined with the commitment to the education and care of young children as they are interlocked in any system offering hope.

Along with this renewed commitment is a frank recognition of the work force crisis facing the early education and care profession. It is a dire situation calling not only for immediate remediation, but also for a long-term solution. St. Michael's has sustained its own work force throughout this pandemic and encouraged and supported professional development which will elevate wages as well as the quality of children's experiences. We work with city, state, and national resources to address and design programs to begin the repair of the early childhood profession.

The much-needed repairs and renovations of the physical plant will ensure that St. Michael's can move into this next stage of evolution. New roofs, ceilings that do not

THIS NEXT ITERATION OF ST. MICHAEL'S WILL ENRICH AND ADVANCE FAMILIES IN EVEN MORE EXPANSIVE WAYS.

leak, windows that are not held in place with tape will contribute to the safety and welfare of all who enter our facility. The renovation of the expansive library will include publicly shared spaces for a social worker and family resources as well as study spaces for cohorts of teachers advancing their careers. The library will be re-designed for young children and people reading to them—teachers, parents, volunteers. Reaching 3rd grade reading level begins with a

love for books and being read to must begin in infancy. There is no advice for parents more important to prepare their child for educational success than to read to their children.

The world of poverty creates an enormous amount of noise in one's brain. Walking into a community that knows you, your child, and your family and is dedicated to your success can be the beginning of a foundation for moving beyond. St. Michael's has a long history of supporting the city of Wilmington through not one but two pandemics of that history. With those deep roots, this next iteration of St. Michael's will enrich, support and advance families in even more expansive ways. It is an exciting time to be here!

- Lucinda Ross, M.Ed.

CAROLYN MARTIN-PETTIWAY ON GENERATIONAL IMPACT



Carolyn Martin-Pettway has a passion for people and for Wilmington. She spent 43 years working for the City in various roles until she transitioned to her current position as Administrative Assistant to State Senator Elizabeth Lockman.

As a life-long resident of the City, Martin-Pettway has a deep knowledge of its rich history, including St. Michael's history of service to the East Side. Generations of her family have attended St. Michael's and many have gone on to achieve post-secondary education and have successful careers. Her great nephew Kaden (pictured with Martin-Pettway above) is currently a pre-schooler. She credits St. Michael's for providing numerous family members with not just a strong educational foundation, but a comfortable, safe haven over the years. **"Good things happen at 7th and Walnut."**, she says. "Children receive the nurturing, care and attention that they need to go on to thrive. They learn to build character, to be compassionate and to have respect for others - these are essential for success in school and life."

Martin-Pettway sees St. Michael's as an important piece of the neighborhood revitalization in the East Side. "It's essential for St. Michael's to continue to be here to set up the next generation of young children and families for success."