

# VILLA VICTORIA

A C A D E M Y



2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT OF GIVING

# Our Mission Statement

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*The mission of Villa Victoria Academy, consistent with the Catholic vision of the Religious Teachers Filippini, is to respect the inherent dignity of each individual, to educate the whole person, and to empower young women to reach their full potential and influence the world in a truly Christian manner.*

## **WE BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING**

- Life is a gift from God and should be safeguarded.
- Every person, created in the image and likeness of God, possesses inherent worth and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every person has the ability to learn and reach her potential. Children are our community's most valuable asset and have a right to safety, love, and learning.
- Education is a shared responsibility of the school community which consists of the administration, faculty, parents, and students.
- The academic and spiritual formation of girls is vital to the human family.
- Effective education develops the whole person - spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.

## **GRADUATE PROFILE**

Graduates of Villa Victoria Academy are well-prepared in a physically and emotionally safe environment that nurtures each student to strive to reach her God-given potential.



*Students from Villa attend the Annual Catholic Schools Mass with Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M.*

# President's Message



Thanks to our Villa Victoria Academy Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, parents, grandparents, alumnae, students, faculty and staff who helped to make the 2024-2025 school year a wonderful year for our school.

On June 8, 2025 we held the 2025 Villa Wall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Gala at The Stone Terrace by John Henry's in Hamilton, New Jersey. It was a terrific evening as we honored Richard Zaremba, Chuck Machion and Jasmine Ross '08 and her family for their many and varied contributions to the Academy. Their plaques of recognition now hang on the wall by our school chapel along with the others who have been selected for our Villa Wall of Fame over the past 25 years. I would like to thank the Wall of Fame committee for their hard work on this event.

Sadly, on August 29, 2025, Richard passed to eternal life. He had worked at Villa for almost 40 years and was known to all as Mr. Richard. He was still working part time helping to train his replacement as he prepared for his retirement. He was a good and faithful employee of Villa and his presence is missed.

Now, more than ever, we need your help in various ways so that we can continue to educate more young women. Be sure and take a look at our calendar of activities for the year and join us in the theater, on the field or at an event. If you would like to visit, please call the Development Office at VVA. We are happy to host you.

Please know that you and your family remain always in the prayers of the Religious Teachers Filippini. God bless you and thank you for the support you continue to show to Villa Victoria Academy.

Together in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Lillian Harrington".

Sr. Lillian Harrington, MPF, President



*Sr. Lillian Harrington (left) and Sr. Mary Klersey (right) are pictured with Richard Zaremba after he received his Wall of Fame Award at the Spring Gala.*

# Director's Message



Dear VVA Family,

On behalf of Villa Victoria Academy, I would like to extend special thanks to all who contributed in some way to our great success during the 2024-2025 school year. A special shout out to our VVA Parent Alliance as they executed so many terrific events for our students and families this year, while raising funds for the school.

Villa Victoria continues to attract students from both Pennsylvania and New Jersey to our strong academic program that places a strong emphasis on Catholic teaching. We are held in high regard for the excellent caliber of our graduates. I was lucky enough to be part of the Student Performance Trip to Italy in April and it was a blessing and honor to see our girls conduct themselves in such a professional and kind manner while we were abroad.

Thank you once again for your generosity. Your support truly makes a difference at VVA!

With appreciation,

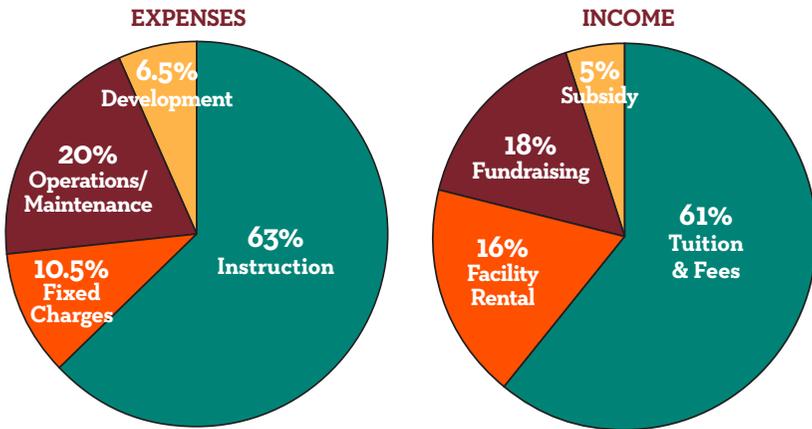
*Colleen White*

Colleen White, Director of Admissions and Development

## Summary of Giving

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, Villa Victoria Academy received over \$221,000 in Annual Fund gifts to the school. This was one of our best Annual Fund years ever and we thank you! The Annual Fund Drive included two mini-campaigns along with a Giving Tuesday campaign. The mini campaigns were *VVA: Shining a Light* (Fall 2024) and *Say Yes to Villa* (Spring 2025).

### Financial Summary 2024-2025



Fundraising by our Villa Parent Alliance and our Super 50/50 Raffle also contributed to our total fundraising income. Your gifts help to offset the expenses of the school and enhance our programs here at Villa Victoria Academy. This Annual Report of Giving acknowledges donations to the 2024-2025 Annual Fund Campaign between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. Gifts received after that date will be included in the 25-26 Report.

# Principal's Message



Dear Villa Family,

The 2024-2025 school year was truly meaningful, guided by our theme of "Shining a Light." This theme was more than a phrase; it was a call to action that our community embraced with enthusiasm and dedication.

Throughout the year, we saw our students shine their light far beyond our campus, participating in service projects that aided those in need both near and far, including the fourth annual AIDS Orphans Rising Walkathon led by the National Honor Society, which has raised over \$12,000 since its inception, to benefit the Religious Teachers Filippini mission in Ethiopia. The commitment and compassion demonstrated by our students and the support of our teachers and parents in these endeavors have made an indelible impact on our school and the world.

The arts also illuminated our school. Our annual spring musical, *Once Upon A Mattress*, captivated audiences and showcased the incredible talents of our students. We also enjoyed two new drama nights, which provided an intimate and creative space for our young actors to showcase their skills. Another bright light was when our singers took their talent across the globe on a performance trip to Italy, an experience that broadened their horizons and allowed them to share their light internationally.

A special Shakespeare All-Day Program, led by the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, immersed students in the works of the Bard, encouraging an appreciation for language and literature. The day of learning and performance showed the intellectual curiosity and creativity of our students.

We are proud to say that the Class of 2025 earned over \$5 million in scholarships and grants. This achievement is a testament to the students' hard work, faculty dedication, and family support. It takes a Villa!

Let us remember that Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

(Matthew 5:15)

*Sr. Lesley Draper, MSF*

Sr. Lesley Draper, Principal



*Villa girls show off their VVA bucket hats-a gift at the Spring Alumnae Speaker Series.*

## VVA Alumnae Speaker Series

For the 9th year, Villa Victoria Academy hosted the Alumnae Speaker Series for the VVA student body. Each year the Villa Board of Directors selects two graduates to speak to the students about how Villa benefited them and also to introduce students to a wide range of career opportunities. Villa's Fall Alumnae Speaker was Olga Gonzalez '01 and the featured speaker for the Spring was Barbara Buerke Stephen '01.

Olga Gonzalez is a Manhattan-based communications specialist and certified gemologist (FGA DGA), leading Pietra Communications, the world's only gemologist-owned jewelry PR agency. With 19 years of experience, Olga merges product expertise with innovative strategies to grow businesses in the luxury space, working with designer brands, manufacturers, retailers, industry technology, and trade non-profits. She is a Past President of the Public Relations Society of America New York Chapter and Past President of the Women's Jewelry Association Metro Chapter. She received the WJA Shining Star Award twice and founded the PRSA-NY 15 Under 35 Awards, which recognizes and provides leadership opportunities for up-and-coming talent in PR. She is also an appraiser and a regular contributor to trade and consumer publications—including as contributing editor for *Gems & Jewellery* magazine.

Barb Buerke Stephen received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from Villanova University and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Barb has been a nurse for 20 years, working as an oncology nurse before transitioning to her role as a Nurse Educator. For the past 10 years, Barb has had the pleasure of training nursing students in the classroom and clinical environment. She recently served as the Director of the Traditional and Transfer BSN Track at Villanova University. Barb is currently pursuing a doctorate at Duquesne University. She resides in Villanova, PA with her husband, father-in-law, and two sons.



*Olga Gonzalez '01 presented to the VVA students in the theatre at the Fall Alumnae Speaker series.*



*Barb Buerke Stephen '01 (third from left) is pictured with other Villa alumnae.*

# Italy Performance Trip

During Easter Week 2025, 17 Villa middle and high school students who elected to join the *Villa Performance Choir* traveled to Italy for three performances. These dedicated students, under the musical direction of Miss Olivia Quinn '18, performed one concert in Florence and two concerts in Rome during the week-long educational and sightseeing trip. The students committed to 14 rehearsals over a two and a half month period to prepare for this trip.

Villa alumnae were also invited to join the Choir and two alumnae, Abby Doolittle Sander '99 and Priscilla Polizzi '23, practiced and performed with the students. At the final performance in Rome, the Mother Provincial of the Religious Teachers Filippini, Sr. Ascenza Tizzano, and three of her councilors attended the concert and joined the group for dinner afterwards. The sisters presented each traveler with a Saint Lucy Filippini rosary, along with their prayers and good wishes.

The singers were joined on the trip by Villa parents, grandparents, siblings, Villa teachers and staff and other VVA alumnae. This group of 46 travelers, under the auspices of the program *America Music Abroad*, and in conjunction with Peak Travel, visited five Italian cities (Siena, Pompeii, Rome, Florence and Pisa) and saw many historic sites. Coincidentally, the group departed on the day that Pope Francis entered into eternal life and were some of the last visitors to the Sistine Chapel before it closed for the papal conclave.

This trip also provided an opportunity for our students and their families to learn more about the home country of our foundress Saint Lucy Filippini and the history and importance of the city of Rome in our Catholic faith. The trip was made more special as it was held during the 2025 Jubilee Year of the Church. The travelers returned with memories to last a lifetime!



*Villa's Italy Performance Choir met with the Mother Provincial Sr. Ascenza Tizzano (center) and her councilors after a performance in Rome.*

# School Highlights

Villa Victoria Academy had a fun, successful and productive 2024-2025 school year for its students. From the first day of school until the last, Villa provided its girls with not only a rigorous education, but also exciting events, retreats and spiritual activities, opportunities for growth, sports competitions and bonding experiences with their fellow Villa sisters. These activities included the following:

## FALL EVENTS

Blessing of the Animals • Villa Talent Show • Freshman Induction and Villa Blazer Presentation • Halloween Costume Competition • Thanksgiving Food Drive  
Class Spirit Points Competition • National Honor Society Induction Ceremony and Reception • Fall Alumnae Speaker Series  
Fall Drama Night Friendsgiving Lunch • Fall Green Thumbs Club

## WINTER EVENTS

Winter Concert including the Hallelujah Chorus with the Dad Choir and Alumnae Secret Santa Party and Christmas Breakfast Party • Junior Ring Ceremony  
Singing at the Super 50/50 Raffle • Catholic Schools Week Activities and Mass  
Winter Ball • All School Advent Prayer Service  
Tree and Nativity Lighting Ceremony • Alumnae and Varsity Basketball Game

## SPRING EVENTS

Annual Musical: *Once Upon a Mattress* • Spring Concert • Spirit Week and Karaoke Contest • Spring Alumnae Speaker Series • Living Stations of the Cross presented by the Junior Class • Senior College Signing Ceremony • Students Singing at Trenton Thunder Game • National Honor Society hosting the Walk-a-thon to Benefit AIDS Orphans Rising • Junior/Senior Prom • Senior Lunch and Field Trip  
Annual Senior Retreat at the Beach • Spring Green Thumbs Club  
Spring Drama Night • Wall of Fame Induction and Gala • Performance Trip to Italy



*Villa graduates are pictured with the Class of 2025 during the Annual Tree Planting at VVA.*

# Parent Alliance Message



Dear Villa Community,

It was another great year for the Villa Parent Alliance! The officers joining me for the 2024-2025 school year were Claudia Aguilar (Vice President/Communications), Helen Hildreth Roszko (Fundraising), and Francis Ramacciotti (Community Building). I would like to personally thank these parents for their support and their continued involvement at VVA. I would also like to thank Colleen White for her continued support and keeping us organized.

The VVA Parent Alliance organizes events to raise funds to support various Villa endeavors. We also lend support to other school sponsored events. We thank all of those who gave of their time and talents last year. We want to extend a special thank you to our event chairs from last year!

The Green Thumbs Club keeps our campus looking great! Kudos to Francis Ramacciotti and Chuck Machion (VVA Board Member) and Gregg Kottas for their efforts. Gregg will be heading up the Green Thumbs in the coming year.

Night at The Races is one of our larger fundraisers and requires lots of help. I would like to acknowledge Helen Hildreth Roszko for preparing over 30 baskets. Thanks also to Villa dad Jerry Dertouzos for serving as our DJ for this event and for Villa Bag Bingo.

Our Tree Lighting event chairs were Jenn Cucarese and David McAnnaney. This is always a great event to help us get in the holiday spirit and bring us together.

Thank you to the parents who helped to sell raffle tickets for the Parent Alliance Raffle Baskets at the Christmas Concert and the Spring Concert. We also had many parents who helped to decorate or staff the Teacher Appreciation Lunch held in May.

Our Pie Sale event chairs were Christine DeFrancesco and Claire Corliss. The Spring Plant Sale chair was Karleen Shim-Chim. Great job, ladies!

So many helped to make our Villa Bag Bingo in June a great success! Special thanks to our event chair Helen Hildreth Roszko and her team. And thanks to those who wrapped baskets, set up the gym, cleaned up or helped in any way. Much appreciated!

I encourage all parents to get involved in the Alliance! It takes a Villa!

I want to wish the new Parent Alliance officers (listed below) best of luck in the coming year. We will be there with you.

David Bailey - President

Alescia Teel - Vice President/Communications

Juliane Vega - Fundraising

Gregg Kottas - Community Building

*Joseph Capobianco*  
Joe Capobianco, President



*Villa dads sell 50/50s at the Night at the Races sponsored by our VVA Parent Alliance.*

# Donor Page

Villa Victoria Academy wishes to thank all those who supported our school financially during the 2024-2025 school year. Tuition alone does not cover the full cost of educating a student at VVA. The Villa Annual Fund helps us to bridge that gap. This year we had one of our highest Annual Fund totals ever thanks to the generosity of the VVA community. Financial support came from every constituency group including alumnae, alumnae parents, faculty/staff, current parents and Board members. Thank you!

During the school year we held two mini-giving campaigns as part of our overall Annual Fund Drive. Donors could write special messages honoring or thanking the Academy, teachers or Filippini sisters. Our Fall mini-campaign was *VVA: Shining a Light*. The Spring mini-campaign was *Say Yes to Villa*. We also held a special day of giving on *Giving Tuesday*-December 3, 2024. We thank everyone who said YES to Villa this year.

This year members of the VVA Board of Directors and Filippini sisters contacted all past donors during the spring to remind them to not forget Villa when making their charitable gifts for the year. We thank them for their hard work making calls and sending notes. Click on the QR code on this page to go to Villa's Giving and Events page. Once on the page scroll down to click on a full copy of the Villa Annual Report which includes a listing of all donors to our Villa Victoria Annual Fund Campaign. You can also access the donor list at <https://villavictoria.org/giving/>.



Members of the cast of *Once Upon a Mattress* with Choreographer Kim Trasatti Topper '05 (far left) and Music Director Katrina Pilchman (far right).

# Villa Victoria Board Members

## ADMINISTRATION

Sr. Lillian Harrington, MPF, President

Sr. Lesley Draper, MPF, Principal

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2024-2025

Villa Victoria Academy is owned and operated by the Religious Teachers Filippini (MPF).

Sr. Patricia Pompa, MPF

Provincial Superior

Sr. Betty Jean Takacs, MPF

Provincial Councillor

Sr. Marianne McCann, MPF

Provincial Councillor

Sr. Marie Antonelli, MPF

Provincial Councillor

Sr. Laura Bezila, MPF

Provincial Councillor

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

The Board of Directors is composed of friends of VVA who are passionate about Catholic education and share their expertise in the areas of finance, facilities management, institutional advancement, marketing and public relations. Board members also serve on one additional sub-committee.

The Board of Directors meets monthly.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sr. Josephine Aparo, MPF

Don Barder

John Butchko

Amy Butta Wisener, '98

Grace Donlon

Enrica Gioè Chrétien, '71

Gina Giordano

Chuck Machion

Colleen Mooney, '00

Janet Stankus

Bethanne Warrack, '75

Phillip Woolfolk

Kathy Zsolway



*The Villa lobby tree changes with the seasons!*

## Super 50/50 Raffle is Back!

We are excited to announce

that by popular demand, the Annual Super 50/50 Raffle is returning this Christmas season, complete with a drawing party at the mansion on

December 13, 2025 at 7 pm. All proceeds benefit Villa Victoria Academy.

Ticket prices will remain the same at **\$100** and we will be splitting winners' shares three ways, with **1st prize paying 50%, 2nd prize paying 30%, and 3rd prize paying 20%**. For example, if 800 tickets are sold, 50% of all tickets sold would be \$40,000:

1st Prize \$20,000

2nd Prize \$12,000

3rd Prize \$8,000

To buy tickets or if you have any questions contact Chairperson John Butchko at **Johnbutchko1480@gmail.com** or call **609-227-3718**. You can also contact Anita Toth at Villa Victoria Academy at **609-882-1700 Ext. 401**.





# VILLA VICTORIA ACADEMY

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All dates are subject to change. Please call the school or visit our website or Facebook page for updates or ticket information.

## 2025/2026 EVENTS... JOIN US!

**Christmas Tree Lighting** • December 5, 2025, 6-7 pm

**Christmas Concert** • December 9, 2025, 7 pm

**50/50 Drawing and Party** • December 13, 2025, 7-9 pm

**Spring Musical** • March 13-15, 2026

**OASIS Day of Prayer for Women (Villa Walsh)** • April 25, 2026, 9 am to 3 pm

**Spring Open House** • April 16, 2026, 5-7 pm

**Spring Concert** • May 19, 2026, 7 pm

**Bag Bingo** • June 12, 2025, 6 pm

**Please help to spread the word about Villa to your friends and neighbors!**

The Villa Annual Report is published annually for the members of the Villa Victoria Academy Community. We welcome contributions in the form of articles, updates and photos. Thanks to the following for their contributions of stories and photos: the Villa Student Social Media Team, Janet Stankus (Elise Stankus '21), Kathy Keelan (Margaret DeLucia'16), Sr. Marie Gagliano, Sr. Lesley Draper, and Rachel Sorrento.

Editor: Colleen White Designer: Kim Waters, Zoe Graphics

Villa Victoria Academy strives for accuracy and apologizes for any errors. Please contact Colleen White at [cwhite@villavictoria.org](mailto:cwhite@villavictoria.org) or **609-882-1700 ext. 419** to make any corrections, to request additional copies or to request to receive a digital copy of our annual report.