

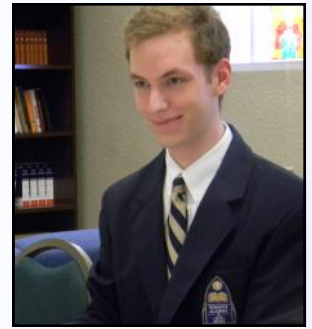
# THE RHODORA REPORT

—CHRISTUM NOVISS VIRTUTEM CONTENDERE—



## THE ACADEMY OPENS NEW BOARDING PROGRAM

This fall saw us welcome our first boarding students. Each of our two boarding seniors, one boy and one girl, live in the Ave Maria University single-gender dorms. Brian, from Indiana, is rounding out his curriculum with an online class in addition to Donahue courses. “I love the Donahue seminar-style classes,” says Brian. “I can actually discuss what I am thinking about an important work, rather than simply being told what to believe.” Brian, who says he is surprised at how good the food is, also is pleased that, “I am not only being prepared for college in my Donahue classes, but figuring out how to live and excel in college since I am already experiencing dorm life.” Sara, a senior from North Carolina, also remarked as to the benefit of getting to figure out what works and doesn’t work in college dorm life. “Plus the people in my dorm are so holy,” she adds, “It’s almost like a different life. I also love being able to have friends and activities at both the high school and college level.” Both boarders benefit from an attentive student life staff at AMU who ensure that their needs are being met. The exciting sports (more than 18 teams) and extra curricular options at AMU provide for plenty of outside activities, but both students report that the challenging curriculum keeps them well focused. These two pioneers have the boarding program off to a strong start. The Donahue Academy is now also poised to receive boarders at the



Brian in Humanities

freshman and sophomore levels. These students will live with supportive host families in Ave Maria. Mature juniors will have the option of living with a host family or living in the dorms. We are also capable of offering international student visas. Please make sure to let your friends and family know about this unique opportunity.



Sara (right) with Senior Vanessa (left) during lunch

## PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENT GROW

We began this first quarter of the new school year with not only an increase in enrollment to over 200 students, but also with the addition of three new full-time faculty positions. Now that we are in our fourth year of operation, our curricular program is at near full strength. The additional classes and students allowed us to bring on board some excellent additions to our growing faculty. Mr. Tyler Graham

joined us to begin teaching our upper division humanities program. Mrs. Pam DeWitt joined us to teach our middle

school humanities program. Finally, Mrs. Jennifer Barley contributes her experience in her new role as a resource

teacher and academic coach to assist all students across the curriculum in attaining their personal best in all subjects.



Sister Mary Margaret with Lea (3rd)

## PART WAY THERE: UPSTAIRS EXPANSION BEGINS



BEFORE

<<

AFTER !!

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THANK YOU!! Thank you to all of you who have helped us get the upstairs build-out substantially begun! Through the generous donations of the Donahue Foundation, an anonymous donor, and several other benefactors, we were able to complete a partial build-out of the upstairs this summer. Construction went down to the wire, but we were able to complete the upstairs hallway, bathrooms, elevator, and two classrooms.

What an exciting opportunity for us. The high school students were particularly thrilled to come back this year to a space they could call their own.

Since opening our doors in 2007, we have added six new full time teachers and five part time teachers. This addition allowed us to have space for the two new faculty members we added this year.



Students enjoying their new room upstairs

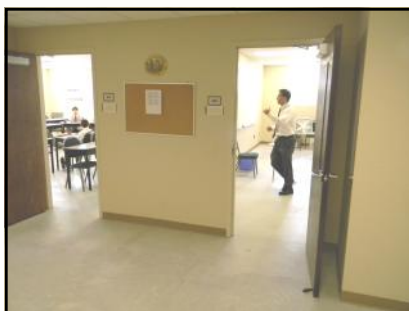
Phase two: **THIS YEAR: We need to raise \$98,000** to provide for next year's critical construction:

1. Complete the deferred upstairs flooring
2. Complete the deferred upstairs climate control system
3. Add a science room and one other classroom so that we can move our students out of temporary space downstairs

Phase three: by 2014 raise \$556,000 to complete:

- Media center
- Up to 7 additional classrooms
- Music and art rooms
- Gym acoustics

Two much-needed classrooms already in use— but more needed!



However, some of our other classes are still meeting in a converted faculty workroom and a storage room. While we are staying half a step in front of our growth, we still need to keep walking because we keep on growing. This is a great challenge to have...but it is still a challenge we need to face. Here are our next steps:

Our future science lab (below) awaits your support!

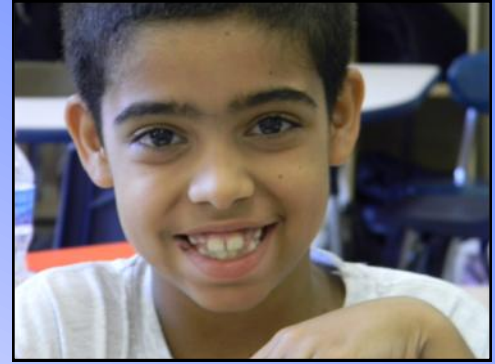


## SPOTLIGHT ON IMMOKALEE

About ten miles from the town of Ave Maria sits the farming town of Immokalee. The large agricultural efforts centered in the town employ many seasonal and year-round residents, over 70% of whom are Hispanic. Roughly half of the children in Immokalee live below the poverty line. The median household income is less than \$23,000 a year. The Donahue Academy benefits from having 15% of its student body coming from this hard-working but impoverished town.

Through state scholarships and **more than \$75,000 in school generated scholarships** thirty students from this at-risk community are getting a world class college prep education. This is a life-changing opportunity for them and their families!

In an effort to provide this deep level of support for the children of Immokalee, the Academy has created the Sunshine Steak Cook-Off this year. On January 29th Florida's only steak cooking contest will occur with all net



proceeds being used to benefit children like Arturo (above) a young Immokalee resident. Those wishing to support the Our Lady of Guadalupe Scholarship fund, which provides more than \$75,000 to such deserving students, may contact the office directly. Thank you!

## CHANGING THE FACE OF FLORIDA FOOTBALL

More than a hundred south Florida high school students had the chance to play full contact tackle football this year thanks in large part to the leadership of the Donahue Academy. Last year the Academy and a



team in the Florida Keys were the only schools playing six-man football south of Tampa. This year five more high schools started teams, many with our explicit help and advice. Our travel time to games was greatly reduced and new local rivalries formed as our second season

went into full swing. Our record also dramatically improved from 1 win and 4 losses last year to 6 wins and 2 losses this year. Our still-young team benefited greatly from the coaching of Mr. Rich Scanlon. Mr. Scanlon recently moved to Ave Maria, and has more than a decade of coaching experience

at the high school and college level (including coaching at Harvard.) More importantly the Christian witness of Mr. Scanlon and all of our coaches assisted our young men to grow in virtue and love of Christ. After each game we invite our opponents to join us center field for Christian encouragement and a prayer. This after-battle gathering of bruised and muddy young men joining hands to give praise to God is the highlight of every game!

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**MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER ARRIVES AT DONAHUE**

The seeds planted last year by volunteer mom Mrs. Janice Williams blossomed into a full-blown inter-school middle school soccer team this year. Last year's after-school pickup practices and intra-squad scrimmages have given way to a uniformed team traveling around the county to represent our school. While not earning any victories this year, each game showed dramatic improvement. Our mostly sixth and seventh graders came together as a team through the first season. Each confrontation with a typically older and veteran opponent team only seemed to energize our players to improve – and they never gave up. The future looks bright for this young team, thanks to volunteer coach and dad Mr. Mark Voorhees, who is also a soccer coach at a local high school. We are hoping to add more athletic teams going forward. It is the hard work and sacrifice of our parents which makes each of these opportunities a reality for our spirited and optimistic students.



**CROSS COUNTRY TEAM ON TRACK**

A new sport is taking shape at the Academy – Cross Country. Under the guidance of college Hall of Fame coach Mike DeWitt (twenty-nine years as a college coach including six Olympians), Sixteen Donahue students grades 3-11 are tearing up the turf and learning proper techniques to endure the challenges of this sport. Coach DeWitt, assisted by his wife, our middle school teacher Pam DeWitt, has great hope for the young team, as do we! None of the runners come with any training or experience, but

they are all excited, building skills, and growing and with each meet recording new personal bests.

Claire (left) and Azariah (5th) love the chance to compete!

