



Where Learning
and Caring Lead
to Personal Best

SAINT CATHERINE ACADEMY

760 TAHMORE DRIVE
FAIRFIELD, CT 06825
PH: (203) 540-5381
FAX: (203) 543-5383

PRESIDENT

HELEN BURLAND

PRINCIPAL

SISTER MARILYN MULDOON, OSU

ADVISORY BOARD

CHARLES CHIUSANA, CHAIRMAN

MICHAEL LABELLA, VICE CHAIR

ALBERT BARBER

DR. MARGARET DAMES

STEPHEN DONAHUE

MICHAEL DONOGHUE

ROBERT FLANIGAN

JERRY HEMENWAY, JR., M.D.

CHRISTINE HERMAN

EDWARD LENARD, M.D.

JERRY MCCLINCH

JAMES O'BRIEN

JOSEPH SINDELAR

THOMAS VITA

MONSIGNOR ROBERT WEISS

HONORARY BOARD MEMBER

SISTER ELEACE KING, IHM,

CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

GERALD M. LUFF

Saint Catherine Academy admits
students of any race, religion, creed,
national or ethnic origin.

NEW PRESIDENT PLANS TO TAKE UNIQUE SCHOOL TO NEXT LEVEL

By: Pat Hennessy

This article is reprinted from Fairfield County Catholic.

"Even within our Catholic school system, people don't know about Saint Catherine Academy," says Helen Nayden Burland, the new president of Saint Catherine's, the only diocesan special education school in Connecticut. "We need to build awareness among the parishes and schools. This population of students deserves our attention and support. We'd like to build a broader community awareness, even among people who may never use this school but would have an appreciation for this ministry."

Burland assumed the position of president this year with exactly that aim in mind. Her tenure comes as Saint Catherine 's has completed a year in its new location on the campus of Holy Cross Parish in Fairfield and is looking forward to the future.

Expansion and Growth

The history of Saint Catherine Academy is one of measured expansion and growth. It began on the grounds of the Catholic Center in Bridgeport in 1999, with a class of four students.

"When I came, most of the students were seven and eights years old," recalls Saint Catherine's principal, Sister Marilyn Muldoon, O.S.U. "Now we've already had our first graduation, and our programs have expanded to include vocational training and independent living."

Burland comes to Saint Catherine's with an interest in education and a strong

administrative background. "I've always been an advocate for education. The opportunity to take it to the next level attracted me," she says. "My role is to build community awareness, financial stability, strategic planning for the next decade.

Focus of Education

The new arrangement allows Sister Marilyn to focus on the educational program, working with students and parents, and fine-tuning the new vocational training. Burland will focus her energies on expanding the visibility of Saint Catherine's and securing its financial future.

"We are in a position to grow," she says. "We have 18 students now, and already have state approval for 28. We have the potential to grow beyond that, but the growth has to be controlled in order to properly train new teachers and to continue to offer individual attention to each of our students."

Burland brings impressive talents to her new assignment. In her most recent position with the Town of Madison, she collaborated with state officials on the passage of legislation for state funding for education.

Prior to that, she served on the Madison Board of Education, chairing the long-range planning committee. She has been the director of admissions and financial aid for the University of Bridgeport and associate director of alumni relations for Fairfield University.

Burland grew up in Stamford, attending Saint Cecilia School and Stamford Catholic (now Trinity Catholic) High School. She graduated *cum laude* from Fairfield University. (continued page 3)

*"We'll keep looking to the future,
exploring what else we can do to
meet the needs of these young
people."*

Helen Burland

President of Saint Catherine Academy

Picture - Helen Burland surrounded by the students of Saint Catherine Academy in her new office.



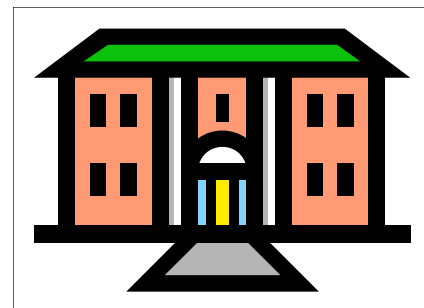
SAILING INTO THE FUTURE 2008

The annual gala for Saint Catherine Academy was held on June 5, 2008 at the Inn at Longshore in Westport. This annual event is the primary fundraiser for scholarship funds. This year's event featured a traditional clambake, live music and silent and live auctions. Over one hundred and fifty people gathered to celebrate the mission and success of Saint Catherine Academy.

The evening was highlighted by the

recognition of Monsignor Robert Weiss and St. Rose of Lima Parish by Bishop William Lori. Monsignor Weiss is a member of the Advisory Board at Saint Catherine Academy and has been a steadfast supporter of our programs for many years.

In addition to individual support, the gala was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, the Diocese of Bridgeport and Catholic Charities.



Caption describing picture or graphic.



I am responsible to feed Snowball her dinner every afternoon before I go home. I feed Snowball with parsley, red or purple lettuce. I also give her a piece of banana, carrot, pellets, and sometimes sweet potato and apple.

Ariel, SCA student

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A BUNNY NAMED SNOWBALL

Sr. Eileen Boffa's classroom is more than the vocational center. It is the home of Snowball the bunny. This quiet animal is central to several key lessons that take place in the vocational center. Functional lessons in:

Responsibility of taking care of a pet: feeding, providing water, and cleaning the cage; whose job is it?

Money management: how much money do we need to buy supplies for Snowball? How much money do we need to provide medical care for Snowball?

Recycling: returning recyclable cans to the grocery store and saving the money to fund purchase of food and health care

Cooperation: students work together to provide daily care

The best lesson the students learn from Snowball is the joy of interacting with their beloved class pet!

GRANT FROM COMMERCE BANK

Michael Labella, Vice President of Commerce Bank and member of Saint Catherine Academy Advisory Board recently presented a \$5000 donation to Sister Marilyn and Helen Burland. The grant is designated to support the further development of the vocational and life skills program.

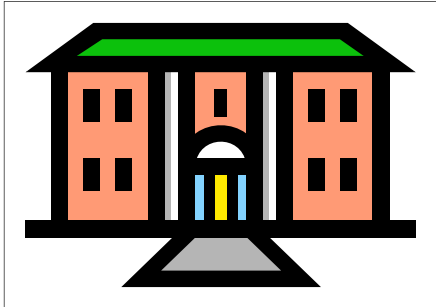
For more information on how to make a donation to Saint Catherine Academy, please call Helen Burland at 203-540-5381 or visit our website at: www.stcatherineacademy.org



NEW PRESIDENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Burland, her husband Tom, and their five children live in Madison, where they are members of Saint Margaret Parish.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Varied Needs

Burland's assumption of duties as president frees Sister Marilyn to pursue the best academic course for the varied needs of Saint Catherine's students. "it's not like a regular class

where children come in and you teach them algebra and then they leave," she explains. "each student has an individualized schedule. Some have intensive language needs, others may need extra time in physical education . Our program is carefully integrated to include art, music, language, physical education, and vocational training. We have to work out the right mix of children in given class."

In addition to working out the best pattern of classrooms for instruction, the staff developed an apartment to simulate an independent home living environment, complete with a working kitchen, living room, and bedroom. "This gave us a chance to move beyond academics to vocational and life skills, and to develop independent living," says Sister Marilyn.

Some Saint Catherine students have already begun working in local businesses on a part-time basis as part of their vocational training, and the school is looking for more opportunities.

"Eventually I would like us to be a resource for the whole community, so that parents who have children with disabilities can come to us for information," says Burland.

"We'd also like to work with parish youth groups so that our students can interact with their peers and be a resource for parish ministers. We'll keep looking to the future, exploring what else we can do to meet the needs of these young people."



A Letter from Santa Claus

Make your list ...

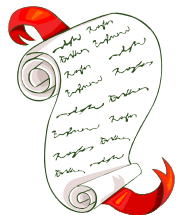
Santa's letters are coming soon.

There is nothing more exciting to a child than getting a letter from Santa before Christmas. With your **tax deductible** donation of \$15 per letter, we will send a letter from Santa to your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, friend, colleague or neighbor.

The best part is that your support will not go unnoticed by Santa because your gift to a loved one is also a gift to the children of St. Catherine Academy. Your donation will help offer the functional academic and life-skills curriculum to children with intellectual deficiency and other developmental and learning disabilities at St. Catherine Academy.

Download your form at
www.stcatherineacademy.com

Saint Catherine Academy Wish List



- Mini van for vocational program
- Recreational equipment-
- Portable Soccer nets
- Playground equipment
- Adult tricycles
- Wii and games
- Office supplies
- Funds for Cultural Arts Program

For more information:
Helen.burland@diobptedu.org

In This Issue

<i>New President Plans to Take Unique School to Next Level</i>	1
<i>Sailing Into the Future 2008</i>	2
<i>Lessons Learned From a Bunny Names Snowball</i>	2
<i>Grant From Commerce Bank</i>	2
<i>New President... Cont.</i>	3



SAINT CATHERINE ACADEMY

760 Tahmore Drive, Fairfield, CT 06825

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

Editor:

Helen Burland
President of St. Catherine Academy
(203) 540-5381
Helen.burland@diobptedu.org

Correspondents include:

Pat Hennessy
Helen Burland
Ariel - SCA Student

**We welcome all questions,
comments and suggestions.**



SAINT CATHERINE ACADEMY

Where learning and caring lead to personal best



Saint Catherine Academy is a private, state-approved school of the Diocese of Bridgeport serving students with special needs. We offer an education program for students who are ages five to twenty-one years old with multiple disabilities including intellectual disabilities and other developmental disorders.

The mission of Saint Catherine Academy is to offer students a path to independence through an individualized program. This program is a unique blend of academic, life and vocational skills. Our specialized, values-enriched environment develops the personal strengths of each student, leading to enhanced self-esteem and personal fulfillment.

760 Tahmore Drive, Fairfield, CT 06825

Phone: 203-540-5381 Website: www.stcatherineacademy.org

Save the Date

**Christmas Pageant
December 23, 2008**

You are invited to our
annual
Christmas Pageant
Tuesday, December
23 at 10:00 am.

**2009 Gala
June 7, 2009**

Celebrate a
decade of success
Bishop William Lori
Honoree