

Summer

2025



ESTABLISHED 1968

Youngstown Diocesan Confederation of Teachers

President's Message

As we get close to the end of another school year, it's easy to feel how fast the time goes! Even so, we can face each year's completion with gratitude and appreciation for all who help keep our Catholic Schools a positive influence in the lives of our students and families!

In an address to the Italian General Confederation of Labor in December 2022, Pope Francis stated that unions are called to be "a voice for the voiceless," and noted that "You have to make noise to give a voice to those who have no voice." We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of this "voice for the voiceless" of which Pope Francis spoke!

And more recently, Ciere Kealty, in her article published in the National Catholic Reporter about Pope Leo's name choice, acknowledged that "knowing the weight of a name, I pray that Pope Leo XIV will live into his choice and be lionhearted on labor justice," as she referenced Pope Leo XIII's work to promote labor unions in *Rerum Novarum*. We, too, pray for Pope Leo and for our world as we continue to work for justice and peace for all God's creation.

We are grateful for all of the hard work from our members, our building representatives, and our officers in the pursuit of social justice and educational leadership. Special thanks to all of our negotiators who worked to complete high school and elementary contracts.

Have a great summer!



Holy Family School

Holy Family has a busy end of the year.

Seventh and eighth graders went to the English Festival where several students won awards. A special congratulations to Adrian Jablonski for placing second in the Candace Gay Memorial Essay Contest! Eighth graders received Confirmation on April 5th, had a wonderful time in Washington DC. April 8-10, and spent the morning of April 29 at the courthouse. Our second graders received their First Communion on May 4. Congratulations! Holy Family School fourth graders have been busy hatching chicks. Addison Shotts in the eighth grade has been helping. She is our resident chicken expert.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that Heidi Skrobola is the new union representative. Congratulations Heidi!!!



St. James School

We are currently enrolling for the 2025-2026 school year and are looking for a new first-grade teacher and a Title I tutor. Kindergarten screenings were held on Saturday, May 3rd. We will be graduating eight students in grades 5 and 6. St. James will only go up to 5th grade next year.

Our end-of-school year is jam-packed with tons of fun activities. Third graders learned all about local history and toured different historical sites within their local communities of East Sparta, Sandyville, Waynesburg, and Magnolia. Our 3rd-6th graders will be learning about safety, prevention, and basic first aid with Paramedic Tracy from our Waynesburg Squad on May 15th.

The ice cream truck will be visiting on May 29th, and the whole school will be going to Sluggers and Putters on June 2nd.

We hope everyone has a safe and adventurous summer!

JFK Lower Campus

Another great year, and went by so quickly. We are proud and thankful to our wonderful staff. Congratulations to Jamie Sklenar, recipient of this year's Golden Apple Award. She also received her Master's Degree in May. Brooke DeJulia was nominated Mahoning Valley 2025 Educator of the Year. We finished the year strong by collecting for a food drive for our Parish and items for The Trumbull County Dog Pound. Each grade had a Religious retreat. We had a representative from our school compete in the WFMJ Spelling Bee. He did very well considering he is a Fourth Grader. Father Cicero had a Blessed Birthday! The school Art Show was a huge success! We had special visitors come to our classrooms such as WKBN Weatherman and even Rembrandt came to teach the Fifth Grade about the Prodigal Son. Our Fifth Graders' Rosary Club will be praying with the Parishioners before our weekly Mass. After school Enrichment classes will continue in the month of May. It is always sad at the end of the year to see our wonderful students move on to the next grade but we are already planning for the next year. Have a safe and restful summer break.

JFK Lower Campus (cont.)



St. Charles School

Saint Charles School has wrapped up an incredible academic year filled with learning, fun, and lasting memories. The school community came together for various events that showcased student talents and achievements.

Grades K through 5, including our school choir provided entertainment at our Fine Arts Show in May; their beautiful voices filled all who were present with such joy. Our students' art work from art class and from Spanish class were also on display. The talent that our students exhibit is awesome. It was a delightful night for teachers, parents, and students. We are so proud of our students' hard work.

The second-grade students recently celebrated their First Holy Communion, marking a significant milestone in their faith journey. Since it is a sacramental year for both the eighth-grade and second-grade students, they joined together for a special Mass and a special breakfast sponsored by the Student Council. The Student Council also sponsored a Charity Volleyball game which was a huge success. Choose Joy and Angels for Animals are the recipients of the money raised. It was a fun night cheering on each other for a good cause.

Our eighth grade students enjoyed a fantastic trip to Gettysburg. They visited Dwight D Eisenhower home, the Jenny Wade House, and toured the battlefields of Gettysburg. It was a great trip filled with wonderful memories that will last a lifetime. In addition, the eighth graders led the May Crowning ceremony. It was a beautiful ceremony honoring our Mother, Mary! 8th graders are eagerly anticipating their class picnic and their graduation at the end of May.

Third-grade students will showcase their research skills and cultural awareness by creating displays and sharing food from different cultures at their Culture Fair at the end of May. Our 7th grade students led us in a beautiful prayer service on Holy Thursday, reenacting the Last Supper. Also, congratulations to our Seventh-grade students who excelled in the school's History Fair, researching and presenting on topics related to the theme, "Rights and Responsibilities." In addition, some of our 7th grade students were inducted into the Junior National Beta Club in May.

The benefits of a school that is a K-8 structure allows for meaningful interactions between students of different ages, as seen in the friendships between fifth and seventh graders and their kindergarten buddies. Our seventh grade students also enjoyed working with first grade students throughout the year on many fun projects as well.

As the year comes to a close, all of our students are looking forward to the end-of-year activities, including a foam party at the end of May and our school picnic on June 3. Saint Charles School is grateful for its dedicated teachers, staff, and students, who make every year a success. Best wishes to all for a wonderful summer!



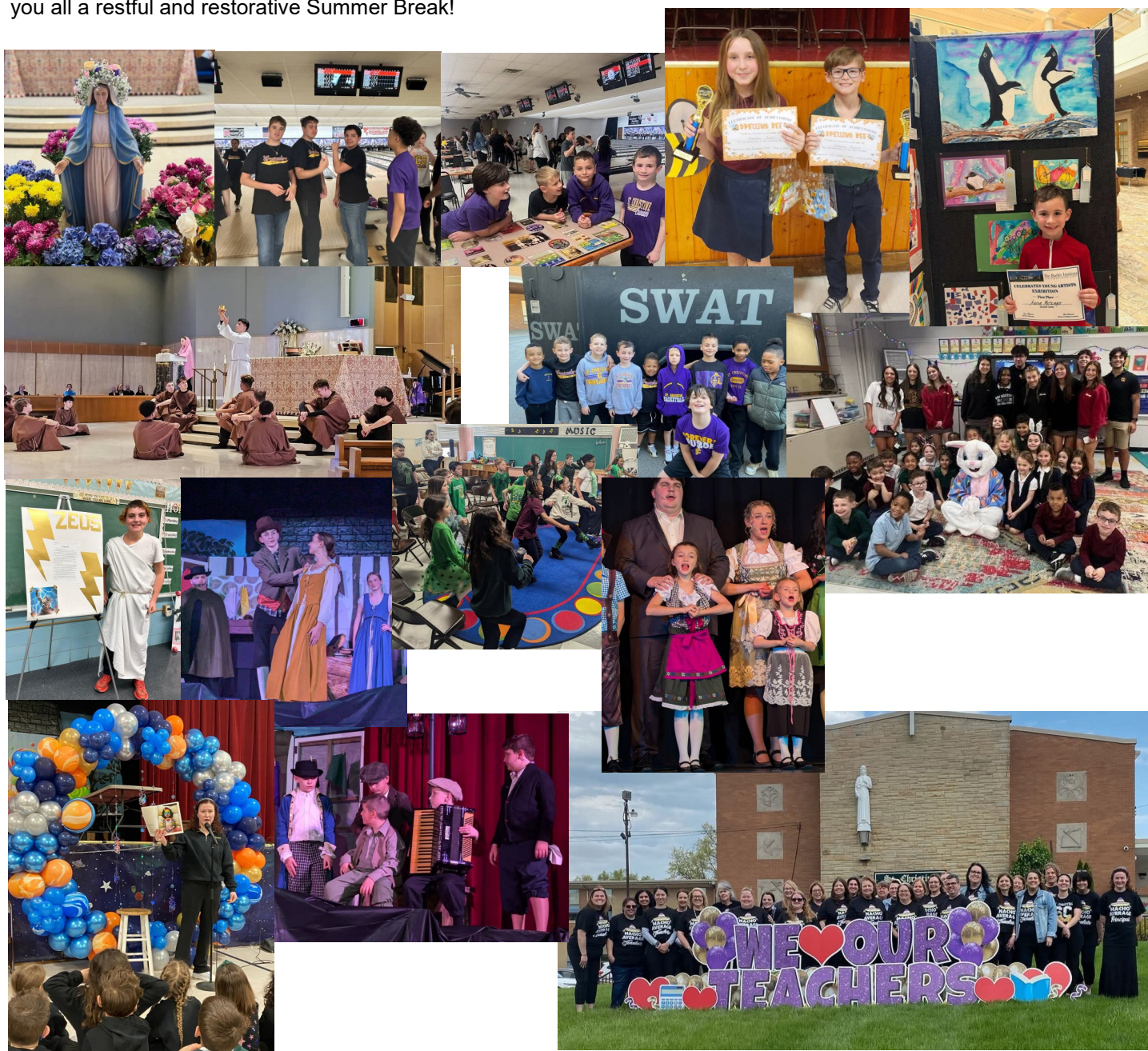
Elementary Schools continued

St. Charles (cont.)



St. Christine School

The last few months at St. Christine have been a whirlwind of Academics, Arts and Athletics. Students have participated in The YSU English Festival, The Butler Institute of American Art Museum Art Show, the Ursuline High School Art Show and The Dom Leone Writing and Art Contest. We are so proud of their outstanding accomplishments. Our spring sports teams are building skills and confidence as they improve with every game, meet and match. In between our days of testing, labs, experiments and class activities, our amazing Home and School Association treated each class to a field trip to go bowling with their classmates and teachers. In April, the musical "Oliver", performed by the 4th-8th grade cast and crew, brought accolades and applause from our sold out audiences at each performance. Two of our elementary age students were chosen to perform in "The Sound of Music" at Cardinal Mooney High School. BRAVO! Congratulations to our 5th grade teacher, Steffani Metz, on the birth of her daughter in March, to our kindergarten teacher, Alyssa Wilburn for earning her Master's Degree from Youngstown State University and to Michele Vargo, our music teacher, for receiving the Golden Apple Award from the Youngstown Diocese. We recognize and celebrate our Second Grade teacher, Charlotte Eskay, on the occasion of her retirement. All of our teachers were honored with a wonderful Teacher Appreciation Week with treats and surprises each day in a Fiesta Theme. We look forward to a swift and strong finish to the school year with several special Masses, Field Day and Graduation planned for the end of May. Wishing you all a restful and restorative Summer Break!





Elementary Schools continued

St. Nicholas School

Students at St. Nicholas School are busy with learning and activities to end the school year strong. What a special treat it was for students from Mooney to come to visit our school with the Easter Bunny. They spent time passing out rosaries to our second graders and egg treats for all of the students. Eighth grade students had a wonderful class trip to Kennywood, spending the day together and having fun before their graduation. Eighth graders, as you prepare for your graduation may you never forget that you will always be a hornet and that we wish you the best of luck as you head to high school. We would like to congratulate Cylina from fifth grade who made her First Holy Communion at St. Patrick's Church Sunday May 4th. We would also like to congratulate Aubree who is getting ready to receive her first Communion on May 11th. May God continue to bless you both as you continue to grow in your faith. The third grade students wrote out beautiful cards and had breakfast for all of the faculty and staff of St. Nicholas School. They wanted to show their thanks and appreciation for all of the teacher's and staff's hard work and dedication.

We would like to congratulate Phyllis Fajack on her retirement. You will be truly missed but the impact you have made on the students and staff will live on forever in our school. We wish you a relaxing, fun and safe retirement.

As the school year is winding down we would like to wish all of our students a very safe and fun summer. We cannot wait to see you in the fall.





Elementary Schools continued

St. Rose School

St. Rose students have been busy this spring. Students participated in field trips to Cincinnati (7th grade) and Washington DC (8th grade). Our Literacy Team Teachers hosted a fun Literacy Night and 3rd grade students participated in the fun pen pal project with students from Ursuline High School. Our 7th and 8th graders represented our school in both English Festival and Math Counts held at YSU.



Our primary grades have worked in the school garden, performed experiments with candy and prayed at the atrium while growing in their faith.

We celebrated our mothers with a Mother's Day tea and our fathers got to participate in a father-daughter dance. Students also participated in Science Fair, History Day and the American Heart Association Kids



Most recently, we were so very honored to have Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Mr. Kenneth David speak to our 6th, 7th and 8th graders and share his extraordinary experience.



May God continue to bless all of our students especially our 8th graders as they made Confirmation and our 2nd graders as they receive their First Holy Communion.





Elementary Schools continued High Schools

St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School and High School

St. Thomas Aquinas High School is pleased to announce several exciting changes to our administrative team and faculty as we continue to grow and strengthen our school community.

We welcome Mr. Scott Giammarco as the Assistant Principal overseeing the High School. Mrs. Jessica Emerick will transition from her role as Dean of the Middle School to become the Assistant Principal of the Middle School. Mrs. Teresa Caserta will lead both divisions as Principal, whose leadership will guide us into a new chapter of excellence.

In response to increased enrollment, we are expanding our faculty and are thrilled to add a science teacher. Additionally, as Mr. Nick Stanek moves into the role of full-time Athletic Director, we are excited to welcome a new math teacher to our team.

We're also excited to announce the opening of our brand new Learning Commons—a dynamic, student-centered space designed to support collaboration, research, and innovation. As part of this exciting addition, we are currently hiring a monitor to oversee and support student learning in this vibrant new environment.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Gabric and Mrs. Johnson, who will be pursuing new opportunities outside of St. Thomas. We thank them for their service and dedication, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

Our seniors are returning from their trip to New York, where they had the opportunity to attend Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral—the largest Roman Catholic cathedral in the United States.

Our middle school students had the wonderful opportunity to watch our high school students perform in the spring musical, *The Sound of Music*.

Our students had a blast during 'Pie Day,' a fun fundraiser for prom where they could throw a pie at a teacher or a member of the prom court for just five dollars.

We look forward to a year of growth, collaboration, and continued academic and spiritual excellence.



News From the Front



High Schools

Cardinal Mooney High School

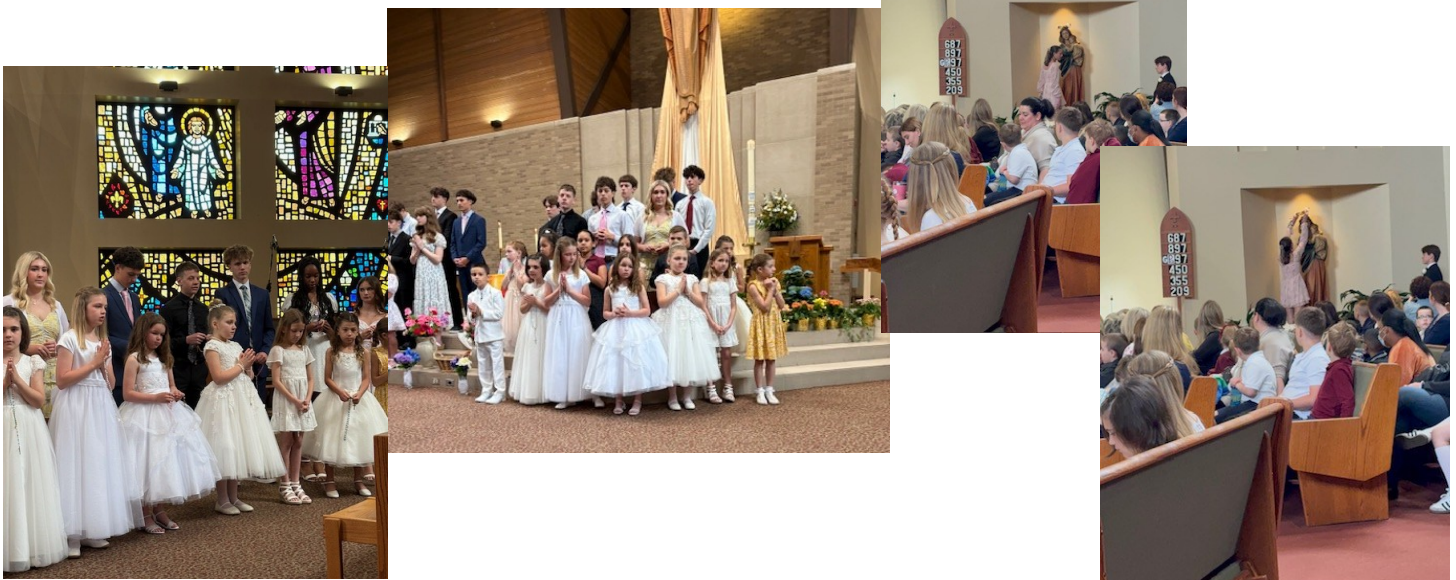
Vince Taddai's journalism class won four first place awards at the 2025 Youngstown Press Club Scholastic Journalism Awards competition. Senior Garrett Bogan was recently named the WKBN Athlete of the Week. Garrett plays soccer, lacrosse and tennis (coached by science teacher Jennifer Policy). The robotics team, the Gladiators, made an impressive debut at the RoboBots competition at Lakeland Community College placing fourth. Science teacher Dave Bernard is the faculty advisor. Students collected 1600 non perishable food items in just six days before Easter Break for Catholic Charities. Seniors Rocco Gentile and Aidan Hryb were honored with the Eagle of the Cross Award. On May 13th Cardinal Mooney held its first ever Biomedical Fair led by students in Jennifer Policy's Biomedical Capstone Class. Health care professionals from across northeast Ohio shared valuable information for students at Cardinal Mooney and the capstone students presented their research findings on teen health issues to their peers.



JFK High School

John F. Kennedy's Upper Campus has enjoyed an exciting and prayerful second semester. In a devastating upset, the senior class bested our staff during the Catholic Schools Week Seniors vs Staff Volleyball Game. In observance of Holy Week, a group of high school students staged a Living Stations of the Cross and presented it to both JFK Campuses. Under the guidance of Mr. Michael Koochner, nine Upper Campus students were initiated into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil Mass. We were honored and blessed to celebrate them as a school family. In early May, our entire 9-12 student body worked at local parishes and charities as a part of our Father John-Michael Lavelle Day of Service. As we head towards final exams, we're excited to celebrate the Class of 2025 with all of their senior activities.

A few more pics from St. Charles





High Schools continued

Central Catholic High School

Recent highlights at CCHS included our combined musical with STAHS, and the hills were indeed alive with *The Sound of Music*! It was a wonderful performance!

Most classes were glued to the news from Rome when our new pope was chosen and announced.



The Sound of Music

Spring Musical at the Historic Canton Palace Theatre



Spring sports teams are finishing up their seasons in all kinds of weather!

Seniors had a good time tie-dying shirts to wear on their last day of school.



Senior Luke Vlacovsky received the Eagle of the Cross award at St. Columba Cathedral.



Our Art Teacher Joanne Zahler is retiring this year. She will be greatly missed but we wish her well in her retirement!





High Schools continued

Ursuline High School



Mitzi Smith

At the conclusion of the 2024-2025 school year, Ursuline High School will bid farewell to Mrs. Mitzi Smith, who is retiring after 24 years of dedicated service to science education in the Diocese of Youngstown. Over the past four years at Ursuline, Mrs. Smith has been a valued member of the faculty, known for her quick wit and camaraderie. Her presence will be missed. We extend our sincere congratulations and gratitude to Mrs. Smith as she begins her well-earned retirement.

This year also marked a new beginning as Ursuline welcomed Mrs. Tiffany Bendersky to the science department. Mrs. Bendersky, with the assistance of fellow faculty member Mrs. Claudia Montaldo, is responsible for launching Ursuline's inaugural Robotics team, *The Technochauns!* Under her guidance, the team and their robot, Sammy, enjoyed a successful debut season and qualified for the state tournament to be held in May. We wish Mrs. Bendersky and the Technochauns the best of luck as they continue to grow and represent Ursuline with pride.

We are delighted to share the joyful news of two recent additions to the Ursuline community. Mrs. Taryn Courtney and her husband, Jake, welcomed son, Joseph Evans, earlier this school year. Carey Palermo and his wife, Tiffany, also celebrated the birth of their second daughter, Liliana Anne. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to both couples.

We are proud to recognize several Ursuline educators and students for their recent awards and accomplishments.

Congratulations to Miss Staci Raab, who was named Mahoning Valley Secondary Educator of the Year as part of the 2025 Mahoning Valley Educator of the Year Awards. Nominees were selected from Mahoning, Trumbull, and Columbiana counties, and Miss Raab was honored as one of five recipients during the award ceremony.



From left: Mrs. Carosella, Mrs. Damore, Mr. Sammartino (UHS administrators) with Miss Raab and fellow UHS science teachers Mrs. DePizzo and Mrs. Smith

Mr. Sauline and Giana

Mrs. Devlin

Mr. Greg Sauline '10 received an Honorable Mention for the Aspirations in Computing Educator Award from the Ohio chapter of the National Center for Women & Information Technology. This award highlights his dedication to encouraging underrepresented students, particularly young women, to explore careers in technology. One of Mr. Sauline's students, Giana, was also recognized with the Rising Star Award.



Quiz Bowl Coaches, Mrs. Scudier and Mrs. Lacko

The Ursuline Speech and Debate Team continues to shine on the national stage. Eight members of the team, along with head coach Mrs. Joan Williams and assistant coach Mrs. Lisa Devlin, will be traveling to Iowa in June to compete at Nationals. We are especially proud of Mrs. Lisa Devlin as she was named Assistant Coach of the Year by the National Speech and Debate Association at the National Qualifying Competition in February. Congratulations to Mrs. Devlin, Mrs. Williams, and the entire team for an exceptional year.

Our Quiz Bowl team also had a remarkable season, finishing in first place at the end-of-year tournament, which featured over 30 competing teams. Senior Adan Sheik earned distinction as the tournament's top individual scorer. Congratulations to our dedicated coaches, Mrs. Mary Kay Scudier and Mrs. Cindy Lacko on another successful season!



Our Most Recent Retiree

We want to thank the teacher from the YDCT Executive Board who is retiring this year!
We are so grateful for the many years and all the commitment she has given to us
and to our schools!

Caroline Mulhall from Holy Family Elementary School

Congratulations Caroline!





Youngstown Diocesan Confederation of Teachers Scholarships

We are so happy to be able to offer scholarships to children of YDCT members who are in our diocesan schools!

This year’s winners of the High School Senior College Scholarship is:

Rocco Difisio
(Ursuline High School)

This year’s winner of the Junior High Scholarship is:

Leo Manning
(Holy Family School)

Congratulations to these winners of our freshman scholarships:

CMHS

Austin Lyons
Despina Atsas
Marcus Cobb

UHS

Dante DeGennaro
Shayleigh Leslie
Preston Stephens

CCHS

Anna Shervish
Jacklin Short
Allison Vincente

JFK Upper

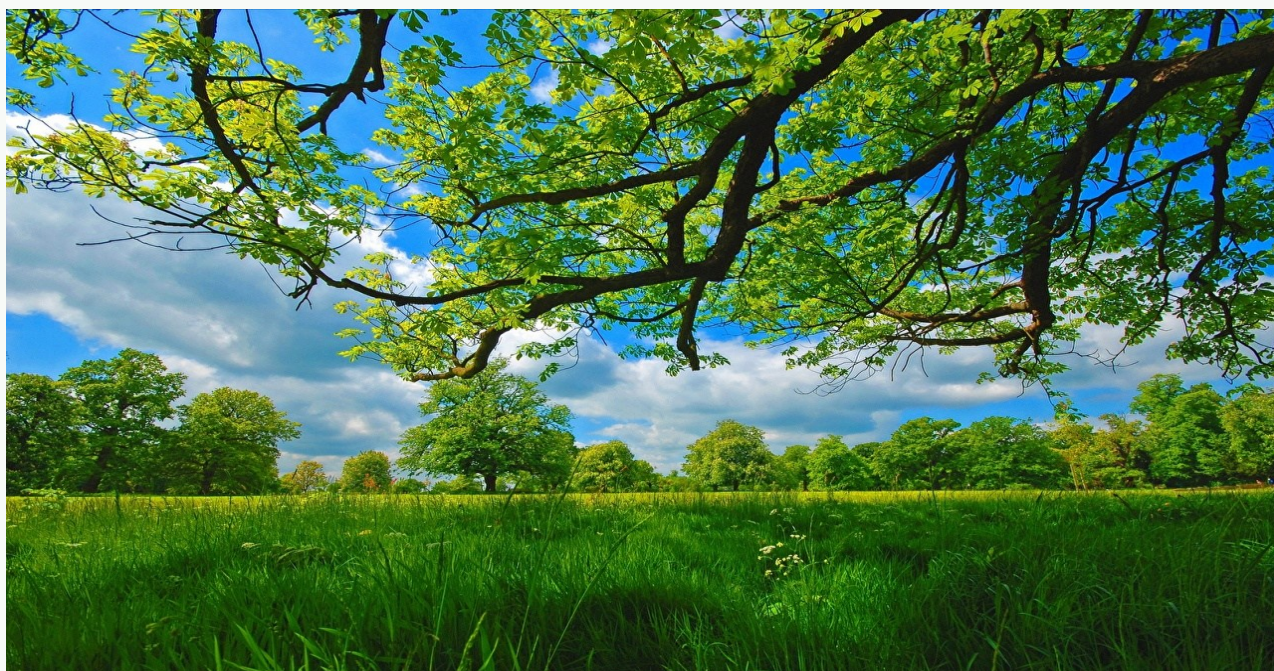
Michelle Fisher
Lilith Phillips
Adrianna Yannucci

STAHS

Alyssa Stanek
Emelin Villatoro-Ramos
Kadarious Blackford



You can find all future editions of the newsletter
and the contracts
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www.ydct.us



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Dana Perretta
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OFFICE MANAGER

*Among the basic rights of the human person must be counted the right
of freely founding labor unions.*

*These unions should be truly able to represent the workers and to
contribute to the proper arrangement of economic life.*

(#68, Gaudium et Spes, Vatican II)