



The Ursuline Education Network assists member schools to continue the Catholic, Christ-centered educational traditions originally established by founding congregations of Ursuline Sisters. The goal of UEN is to ensure the charism of St. Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursuline Order, remains an integral part of the educational experience from preschool through college. Together, we create programming to help member schools follow St. Angela's directives to faithfully and joyfully fulfill their Catholic missions. This spring edition of *Laurel Links* celebrates and honors *good works* from member schools and showcases some of the UEN programs offered annually. **Be sure to make note of scheduled programs for 2025-2026.**

**Friday September 26, 2025**

**UEN Conference and Presidents/Principals meeting  
Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, OH**

*Times and Circumstances: A-I in the Ursuline Classroom*

**Featured keynote Michael Beck, Founder of KIDS WHO CODE**

**Thursday January 15-Sunday January 18, 2026**

**UEN biennial Student Retreat**

**Ursuline Academy Dallas, TX**

*"God will be in your midst"*

*Practicing St. Angela's Counsels in Daily Life*

**Facilitated by Jane Cruthirds, Director of Mission and Formation**

**Sacred Heart Schools, Louisville, KY**

**Saturday March 7 - Thursday March 12, 2026**

**United Nations 70th Commission on the Status of Women**

**New York City, NY**

## SERVICE AWARDS

| School  | Student Name | Grade |
|---|--------------|-------|
| Academy of Mount St. Ursula - Bronx, NY               | Abril L.     | 12    |
| Academy of Mount St. Ursula - Bronx, NY               | Brianna R.   | 12    |
| Beaumont School - Cleveland, OH                       | Aliyah C.    | 12    |
| Beaumont School - Cleveland, OH                       | Clare S.     | 12    |
| Mount Merici Academy - Waterville, ME                 | Ruby B.      | 8     |
| Mount Merici Academy - Waterville, ME                 | Abby B.      | 6     |
| Sacred Heart Academy - Louisville, KY                 | Lexi J.      | 10    |
| Sacred Heart Academy - Louisville, KY                 | Sophia R.    | 10    |
| Saint Ursula Academy - Cincinnati, OH                 | Abby C.      | 12    |
| Saint Ursula Academy - Cincinnati, OH                 | Camille R.   | 11    |
| St. Ursula Academy - Toledo, OH                       | CK K.        | 12    |
| St. Ursula Academy - Toledo, OH                       | Madison R.   | 12    |
| St. Ursula Villa - Cincinnati, OH                     | Eliot H.     | 8     |
| The Ursuline School - New Rochelle, NY                | Lauren C.    | 11    |
| The Ursuline School - New Rochelle, NY                | Andrea M.    | 12    |
| Ursuline Academy - Cincinnati, OH                     | Sofia C.     | 12    |
| Ursuline Academy - Dallas, TX                         | Kara C.      | 11    |
| Ursuline Academy - Dallas, TX                         | Delia O.     | 11    |
| Ursuline Academy - Dedham, MA                         | Claire M.    | 12    |
| Ursuline Academy - New Orleans, LA                    | Alexandra S. | 12    |
| Ursuline Academy - St. Louis, MO                      | Joie K.      | 11    |
| Ursuline Academy - St. Louis, MO                      | Ellen W.     | 12    |
| Ursuline Academy - Wilmington, DE                     | Ellie R.     | 10    |
| Ursuline Academy - Dedham, MA                         | Victoria A.  | 12    |
| Ursuline High School - Wimbledon, England             | Maryam I.    | 10    |
| Ursuline High School - Wimbledon, England             | Lilian Q.    | 7     |
| Ursuline High School - Youngstown, OH                 | Ella D.      | 12    |
| Ursuline High School - Youngstown, OH                 | Anthony T.   | 12    |
| Villa Angela - St. Joseph High School - Cleveland, OH | Chandler B.  | 11    |
| Villa Angela - St. Joseph High School - Cleveland, OH | Kahlan K.    | 12    |

The Ursuline Education Network honors students who model St. Angela's 10th Legacy: "Never fail to render your neighbor the services that may depend on you" by awarding annual Student Service Awards. Member schools may each nominate two students, of any grade, who exemplify attributes from the following criteria:

- is a student who models the teachings of St. Angela Merici; sees a need and puts service into action to resolve a difficult situation.
- is a leader who can rally others to assist with the "cause" and can work together to achieve the desired goal.
- an individual who is Christ-like in their approach to need/suffering, someone who puts the needs of others above self.

Student recipients were announced January 27 and their essays were featured on the UEN website. Each student received a certificate and service pin.

*"A soul on fire with  
CHARITY  
does good and  
HOLY WORK."  
~ St. Angela*



Saint Ursula Academy (SUA) in Cincinnati has teamed up with The Carl H. Lindner College of Business at the University of Cincinnati for an initiative to provide SUA students with college-level coursework in entrepreneurship and the opportunity to earn College Credit Plus (CCP) credits. What makes the Essentials of Entrepreneurship course so unique is that it is a CCP course taught by Lindner faculty member Dr. Chuck Matthews, who travels to teach the course on the Saint Ursula campus. The program is offered to SUA juniors and seniors and in its first year, the program has been a great success. Students in the program work with area professionals on projects and hear from some of the area's top leaders. Program participants also have the opportunity to engage with UC's Center for Entrepreneurship, as well as Lindner co-curricular activities concentrated on uplifting women in business and women in entrepreneurship. Activities include business pitch competitions, venture capital programming, Lindner Women in Business' Empowerment Day, Lindner Summer Institute, as well as access to Lindner and UC alumni, UC Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, and Center for Entrepreneurship student mentors.



*Learners to Leaders*

### *Kon'nichiwa!*

Sacred Heart Academy's enrollment grew by eight students and a teacher in March as they welcomed exchange students from St. Ursula School in Hachinohe, Japan for a two-week cultural immersion visit.







In a vibrant celebration of leadership and legacy, the St. Ursula Academy Learning Commons, at **St. Ursula Academy of Toledo, OH** now features a stunning mural dedicated to former SUA principal Nichole Flores '89, who passed away last year. Created through the collaborative talents of SUA art teacher Caroline Jardine and junior Mia Hayes, the artwork stands as a permanent tribute to Flores' impact on the SUA community. The mural incorporates inspirational words from St. Angela Merici, connecting Flores' modern leadership to the 170-year tradition of Ursuline education at SUA. As we commemorate the 170th anniversary of the school's founding by the Ursuline sisters in 1854, this artistic installation bridges past and present, honoring those who have shaped our institution. "The artwork captures both Mrs. Flores' spirit and our Ursuline values," Jardine said. "Working alongside Mia to create this piece was a meaningful way to honor someone who has given so much to our community." Students and faculty alike have embraced the mural as a daily reminder of Flores' dedication and the enduring principles she championed during her tenure. The colorful installation ensures that her contributions will continue to inspire future generations of young women at SUA.

**The Ursuline School in New Rochelle, NY**, held its annual Global Symposium on February 27, 2025. The event focused on Sustainable Agriculture, featuring keynote speaker Pashon L. Murray, founder of Detroit Dirt. Murray emphasized service leadership, sustainability, and environmental stewardship, sharing her journey from farm life to activism. She highlighted regenerative farming, carbon neutrality, and composting, encouraging youth-led solutions to climate change. Students from our sister school, the **Academy of Mount St. Ursula**, attended and later engaged in meaningful dialogue with our AP Government students and Murray. Her visit to Earth Science students reinforced real-world sustainability applications. Murray's inspiring message urged students to take action and work toward a more sustainable future.







## “A PRESSING AND CENTRAL TASK”

### 69th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Examining the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

**Considered the largest, annual gathering of women in the world, CSW convenes every year in March. Featured are some reflections and pictures submitted from member schools who participated.**

Ursuline Academy of New Orleans Principal Sue Heidel and high school teacher Christina Schlaudecker traveled to New York City with six 11th-grade students to join other Ursuline schools in attending the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Bringing together individuals and organizations committed to advancing the rights of women and girls worldwide, Olivia Erspamer, Sloane Pierce, Isabella Quin, Isabella Quintana, Meredith Becker, and Milena White attended the event on behalf of UA. During the event, the Ursuline Education Network had been actively involved with the Working Group on Girls, a non-governmental organization committee associated with UN Women. The focus has been addressing the special needs of girls, including equality, education, and the right to be protected from oppression in any form.





On International Women's Day--March 8, 2025--six **Sacred Heart Academy** students traveled with Jean Frazier Leadership Institute Director Lauren Hitron '99 and Program Manager Lauren Coffey to New York City to attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Providing authentic leadership experiences is a central component to the Jean Frazier Leadership Institute and Sacred Heart Academy, and for a few pivotal days in NYC, these students had the opportunity to see the impact of leadership on one of the biggest stages of international relations and government.



Students attended events sponsored by member states' governments on women's issues such as human trafficking, impacts of technology and the digital world, leadership, political participation, economic empowerment, women's health, human rights, and more. A highlight was attending a session sponsored by UNICEF POWER4GIRLS: Invest in Girls, Transform the World. Students will apply what they learned on the trip and create a presentation and proposal for action to share with the SHA community.

Six UEN member schools brought groups of students to the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York City. CSW is the world's main policy-making body dedicated to gender equality, the advancement of women, women's rights and monitors progress towards gender equality for women and girls. Annually, the Commission is considered the largest gathering of women globally. It is estimated that approximately 16,000 women attend the CSW in its first week alone. UEN schools partnered with NGO's The Grail of the Bronx and Working Group on Girls to secure UN grounds passes. Additionally, some of our students participated in a parallel panel event, hosted by The Grail and WGG, chaired by girls, for girls. Three Ursuline students spoke alongside students from Botswana, Nepal and Zimbabwe. After the panel, UEN schools enjoyed lunch together. Schools in attendance were SUA (Cincinnati) Sacred Heart (Louisville), Ursuline (New Orleans) Ursuline (Wilmington) and The Ursuline School (New Rochelle). Academy of Mount St. Ursula attended the Commission on a alternate day.



Any time Ursuline schools can unite to celebrate and elevate women and girls is a good day! The Commission was incredible to attend. From the opening session, to numerous side events by various NGO's and parallel events covering every imaginable social disparity for women and girls, there was one key take-away: educating girls is the best investment to build strong communities. Many times in Commission sessions the message that educating girls is transformative was proven by regional data. Moreover, the voices of young women who spoke of transformation within their lives and communities because they had the opportunity of education resonated loudly during the week. Ursuline Education Network students left NYC inspired and motivated to impact change themselves.



# SPORTS

**Saint Ursula Academy Cincinnati** is celebrating a new State Championship trophy. The Saint Ursula volleyball team won the DII State Championship this fall, competing in Dayton, Ohio. The team was invited to celebrate with state lawmakers after Christmas at the Statehouse in Columbus, Ohio.



## SACRED HEART BASKETBALL WINS 5TH CONSECUTIVE KHSAA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



On Saturday, March 15th, the #1-ranked **Sacred Heart Academy** Valkyries defeated George Rogers Clark 65-60. Valkyries are first team in KHSAA history, boys or girls, to win five state championship titles in a row. ZaKiyah Johnson was named Sweet Sixteen MVP for fourth year in a row. This championship is the ninth for the SHA basketball program overall.



Congratulations to **Ursuline Wilmington's** Swim Team on becoming the 2025 Delaware State Champions for the third year in a row! They won with a dominating team score of 341 points, by nearly a 100-point margin, which is one of the largest in Delaware girls' championship history. In addition to marking their 3rd consecutive State, this is their 4th undefeated season in a row and 10th State Championship in program history! And to top it off, senior Ellie Johnson was named Swimmer of the Year!

## SISTER SCHOOL LACROSSE TOURNAMENT

Hosted by **Ursuline Academy, Dedham**, the sisterhood bond was stronger than ever at this year's *Sisters Lacrosse Tournament* in April. Teams from UEN schools in St. Louis, New Rochelle, and Wilmington enjoyed the friendly competition and opportunity to get to know each other.





Anastasia Carpenter, a junior at **Ursuline Wilmington, DE**, has been named to the University of Delaware's Top 100 Emerging Innovators of 2025. She will be recognized at the Limitless World Summit in May! There was an incredible pool of applicants representing 34 countries and 25 states, all of whom are doing amazing work. Director of Innovation & Leadership, Mrs. Erin McNichol, had this to say about Anastasia: "In both classes and cafe, Anastasia is a creative leader who empowers others to excel. She believes in collaboration, and she models this through her own active participation. The best example of this leadership trait is the student-run coffee shop at Ursuline, Angela's Cafe for which Anastasia was voted Managing Director last Spring. As a start-up, Angela's Cafe was a blank canvas that needed strong and decisive student action to bring it to life for the entire campus. It is a tall task to meet the needs of both middle and high school students and faculty, as well as balance academic demands-- while managing a business. Anastasia was up for this challenge.



She formed a team, dubbed "The Crew" and set about organizing training sessions with our coffee bean supplier and partner, Little Goat Coffee Roasting Company. Once training was completed, Anastasia met with school administrators to ensure that students would earn credit for shifts. She negotiated points per shift to acquire gift cards at the school store as a form of payment for student crew members. An organizational chart was developed that includes both customer-facing and business operation teams that report to Anastasia as the managing director. It's not easy to hold your peers accountable, but Anastasia does so in an easy-going way, with a calm demeanor and a patient attitude." Congrats, Anastasia!

*"You have more need to serve others  
than they have to be served."  
~ St. Angela's First Counsel*



Grace Irving '26, pictured second from the left below, is junior at The Ursuline School, New Rochelle, NY.



Grace traveled to the Taizé Monastery in France, where she experienced faith, community, and service. Inspired by the happiness she observed, she explored the connection between religiosity and well-being in high schoolers through an award-winning research project. Her findings revealed that religious coping correlated with optimism and gratitude, though gender differences in well-being persisted. Irving's study highlights the intersection of faith and science, reinforcing her belief that both disciplines complement each other in understanding and serving humanity.



Together, **Academy of Mount St. Ursula** in the Bronx and **The Ursuline School** of New Rochelle, NY engaged in service projects, including making sandwiches for the hungry and creating cards for the sick to honor International Serviam Day, January 25. Volunteers at POTS in the Bronx served hot meals and packaged groceries. The day strengthened global Ursuline bonds, inspired lifelong service, and honored St. Angela Merici's call to serve with purpose, compassion, and courage, reinforcing Serviam as a way of life.



More than 70 people served during International Serviam Day at the Ursuline Central Provinces offices in St. Louis, including nine Ursuline Sisters; alumnae, students, faculty and staff at Ursuline Academy-St. Louis; family members and friends. The volunteers made 640 sandwiches and inspirational notes for the St. Vincent de Paul parish sandwich window, more than 100 Valentine cards for residents of Our Mother of Perpetual Help (including Ursuline Sisters) and 200 bookmarks for Books for STL kids, in addition to collecting 50 cozy blankets for St. Louis Children's Hospital!





## United in Heart

*Submitted by Bernice Kearney '85, alumna of Ursuline Academy - Dallas, TX*

Sisterhood is a powerful thing. Sometimes, it feels familiar and warm. Sometimes, it can sneak up on you. And other times, both things can be true at the same moment. In March 2025, 11 alumnae from classes spanning five decades (1977 – 2016) journeyed to Chile for Ursuline's Inaugural Alumnae Delegation. It was a chance to experience the world with each other, in much the same way that current students participate in cultural and educational delegations with our sister schools. The opportunity introduced us to one of South America's most vibrant countries, where we met students, alumnae, faculty, and administrators from two Ursuline schools, learned about the Chilean culture, and experienced a whole new level of sisterhood on the other side of the equator. This was indeed an exploration – of different cultures, schools, and our own relationships. Some renewed old friendships, as they may have laid dormant in the years since graduation. Quickly, they returned with a familiarity that was comfortable and comforting. New friendships grew as we learned each other's stories. It was a feeling of discovery like those we experienced in the beautiful communities of Santiago, Maipu, Pomaire, and Isla Negra. The day we arrived at Colegio Santa Ursula in Santiago, an unexpected moment of sisterhood snuck up on us. The students greeted us with signs and red heart-shaped balloons, cheering as we rambled up the drive. We were delighted and charmed by their excitement. A few days later, we experienced something similar with the girls at Colegio Santa Ursula in Maipu. Both groups of students proudly showed us their campuses, chatted about their classes, and asked us about our own experiences as Ursuline students. And finally, twice during the trip we spent time with alumnae from Santa Ursula. They invited us into their homes, showed us their communities, and introduced us to their culture. We talked about similarities and differences in our experiences and instantly felt a connection with all of them. These were the welcomes of new sisters united by the Ursuline Experience; a sisterhood that is uniquely Ursuline, found all over the world.

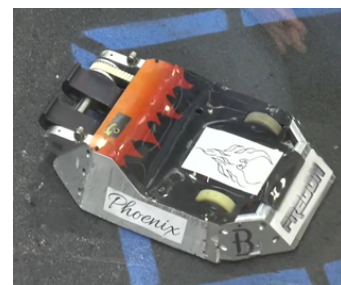




**St. Ursula Academy of Toledo, OH** was selected as a winner of BCSN Network Sports' *Project Prom*, a video contest that promotes drug and alcohol-free prom nights for high schoolers in Toledo. The Junior Student Council members accepted a prize of \$1,000 towards their Prom/After-Prom activities, and SUA junior Ella received a gift card for having one of the panel's favorite video entries. Congratulations!



Students from **Beaumont School**, Cleveland Heights, Ohio competed in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual ROBOBOTS competition sponsored by Alliance for Working Together Foundation (AWT) at Lakeland Community College in Cleveland, Ohio. Their BOT, *Phoenix* competed in battle but was eliminated in the semi-finals round.



Developing the BOT using study, creativity and engineering skills over the course of the year, the competition showcases students STEM achievements in a fun and exciting venue. According to AWT's summary of the competition, "All teams are winners because they learn extensively throughout the school year as they build their bot, strengthen their team, and prepare for the interview. The battles in the cage result from countless hours of hard work, and the interview gives a voice to that effort."

*St. Ursula Villa in Cincinnati, Ohio, dedicates the Paul Loechle Outdoor Learning Pavilion. The new campus addition, dedicated in memory of their beloved former principal, will remind students and visitors alike of what Paul stood for – stimulating young minds in a spirit of exploration, creative learning, and fun.*



## WALK WITH ANGELA

In celebration of Catholic Sisters Week 2025, the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville invite you to virtually walk the path of St. Angela Merici on the 500th anniversary of her historic Rome pilgrimage. The interactive map brings St. Angela's journey to life with short videos narrated by Louisville Ursuline Sisters at each location. There are six videos total, great for all ages to enjoy!

Access the virtual map by visiting their [website](https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/walkwithangela/):  
<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/walkwithangela/>





Sixteen Spanish students from **Ursuline Academy of Cincinnati** spent their spring break in Peru as part of a cultural immersion and service-learning experience! From bonding with students at the Ancoto school in the Sacred Valley, to staying with Quechua-speaking families in the Andes, to exploring the breathtaking ruins of Machu Picchu—this trip was packed with unforgettable moments. Students returned home with new cultural insights, language skills, and memories to last a lifetime.



## Be as Ministers and Servants Guidance From St. Angela's First Counsel UEN Student Leadership Conference



Higher Ground Retreat Center in West Harrison, Indiana was the location for UEN's biennial Student Leadership Conference in February. In partnership with the Jean Frazier Leadership Institute of Sacred Heart Schools in Louisville, 23 sophomores and juniors, and 11 adults from 6 schools participated in development sessions focused on time management, planning and problem solving. Formation components of the Conference were drawn from *Leadership From the Heart*, by author Mary-Cabrini Durkin. Student feedback was extremely positive as one student's comments echoed many others; *"I am so grateful that I got the opportunity to attend the conference this year. I learned so much about myself and how to become a better leader. I am so grateful that I got to meet all of the amazing girls from around the country. This conference has really changed my perspective and I have gotten so much out of it!"* The next Leadership Conference is scheduled for February of 2027.



Please pray for UEN educators who will be participating in the Jubilee pilgrimage June 1-10, 2025. Thirty pilgrims will be following Angela's history from Desanzano to Rome, during which some of the teachers will be creating new classroom content for member schools.



URSULINE  
EDUCATION  
NETWORK

## Times and Circumstances

Artificial Intelligence in the Ursuline Classroom  
Conference and Presidents/Principals Meeting

**Friday September 26, 2025**

**Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, OH**



Featured Keynote:  
Michael Beck

*A-I innovator with a passion for embedding responsible-use principles in schools, Michael is the founder of the nonprofit CODE FOR KIDS.*

Open to all UEN administrators and educators.

Conference information and registration will be distributed in July.  
Contact Peggy McCormick-Platz with questions:  
[peggy@ursuline-education.com](mailto:peggy@ursuline-education.com)

## UEN Board of Trustees

Carrie Wentzel, Chair - Sacred Heart Schools, Louisville, KY  
Michele Bernot, Vice-Chair - Beaumont School, Cleveland, OH  
Kathy Hammond, Treasurer - Saint Ursula Academy, Cincinnati, OH

Mimi Bason - Ursuline Academy, Dallas, TX  
Dr. Patricia Boehm - Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, OH  
Jen Guzman - St. Ursula Academy, Toledo, OH  
Kathy Hammond - St. Ursula Academy, Cincinnati, OH  
Meghan McArdle, OSU - Academy of Mount St. Ursula, Bronx, NY  
Dr. Trisha Medeiros - Ursuline Academy, Wilmington, DE  
Dr. Colleen Melnyk - The Ursuline School, New Rochelle, NY  
Joni Mullen - Ursuline Academy, St. Louis, MO  
Mary-Kate Tracy Robidoux - Ursuline Academy, Dedham, MA  
Stacy Shoulta - Mount Merici Academy, Waterville, MA  
Julia Waters - Ursuline High School Wimbledon, England  
Lisa Wolfer - St. Ursula Villa, Cincinnati, OH  
Christy Zurcher - Ursuline Academy of New Orleans, LA



## Contact UEN

Peggy McCormick-Platz, Director  
[peggy@ursuline-education.com](mailto:peggy@ursuline-education.com)

