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- * Now closed
- ** Includes the Academy of Honors at New Bedford High School





EVERY SCHOOL MISSION -

no matter how beautifully crafted, urgently needed, or laser-focused - is simply a rallying call. Only when people respond to that call and come together with their collaborative, collective efforts can a mission truly be made real.

Each year, our annual report lists the many volunteers, supporters, teachers, and others who embody and enable the mission of OSS.



Left to right: Sarah Herman, Martha Sullivan, Kerry Lynch

While they each contribute in a uniquely important way, they share certain things in common. They have a love

for, and a commitment to, their community. They understand the formative importance of middle school. They are passionate about supporting girls - their abilities, potential, and rights. They believe in OSS. And they willingly put themselves, their time, and their gifts on the line for that belief - this is especially true for OSS families and students.

The OSS community is always evolving, of course. Students matriculate and then graduate, volunteers retire, teachers and staff transition. Yet all leave their mark, and most retain their connection.

In this issue, we feature just a few representatives of our extraordinary community. While the profiles highlight the unique imprints of particular individuals, we hope all readers see themselves in these samplings, as we do.

Thank you for your loving contributions to our school and community. You are part of the intricate tapestry we're weaving together, providing our students with the extraordinary education and life skills advantages that they deserve.

Sincerely,

Sarah Herman

Sarah Herman Head of School

Keny Lynch Kerry Lynch Co-president Board of Trustees

Martha Sullivan

Martha Sullivan Co-president Board of Trustees

"This school has sculpted me to be a strong, confident, and genuine young woman...I could not have done it without our OSS staff and volunteers." Allison '23



Sofia '26 and Amina '26

Front cover (left to right): Jayel '27, Juliana '27, Elianny '27

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION



Olimpia Andrade '16

Imagine you're a first-generation, firstyear college student, born and raised in New Bedford, attending a highly competitive Southern school. You're on your own now, trying to figure out the rules of this strange new road. You're surrounded by students from the world over, all of whom were among their high school's top 5% achievers. Like you, they want to maintain that same status here.

Now imagine you're carrying a full course load at this school and you're working a full-time job to cover tuition payments. Then – if you $c\alpha n$ – imagine you're doing all this while maintaining a GPA approaching 4.0.

Olimpia Andrade doesn't need to imagine this, of course. It's what she did. It's who she is. It's why she'll be graduating magna cum laude with a degree in political science. intern experience on Capitol Hill and student government, mentoring and financial management roles on campus and beyond, and more.

It's all purpose driven. Olimpia is planning a career in politics and fiscal policy, allowing her

to direct and steward investment in communities with few resources vet lots of potential. First, though, Olimpia wants a career in finance. "I've seen how financial struggles can limit people and hinder success. I want to know how to build wealth, and maintain it, so **my** children don't have that struggle." It's a goal that Olimpia holds alongside her appreciation for the struggle itself. "It makes you resilient and resourceful," she says. "You **own** what you achieve."

Olimpia recalls seventh grade at OSS as a turning point. "That's the year I started focusing on being my best," she says, remembering the promise she made to herself, for herself, that she'd get straight

As. It was a promise she kept by putting in the effort needed to form good habits.

"It's not about being academically gifted," Olimpia explains. "It's about being persistent, consistent, determined, and prepared."

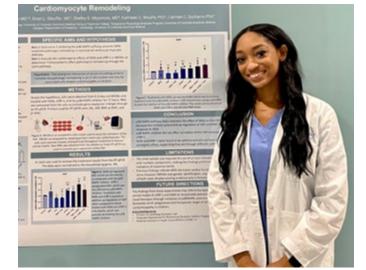
Olimpia believes her OSS education has kept her "ahead of the curve" even among her high-achieving college peers. She thinks the small class size and creative curriculum were key to her academic success. But she believes something else she gained here is what really sets her apart. "When you have soft skills like empathy and compassion, you can relate to people; they open up more easily. And when that happens, everything works out so much better!"



Olimpia in 6th grade at OSS

"It's not about being academically gifted," Olimpia explains. "It's about being persistent, consistent, determined, and prepared."

Spelman College in Atlanta is considered the nation's number one Historically Black College and University, and is ranked among the top 50 liberal arts colleges by U.S. News & World Report. One of the most selective women's colleges in the nation, alumni include Stacey Abrams, Marian Wright Edelman, Alice Walker and — as we proudly profile here — two OSS graduates on track to earn their degrees in 2024.



She presented her findings (Midkine and sFRP-1 on Cardiomyocyte Pathologic Remodeling) at the Annual Biomedical Conference for Minoritized Scientists held in Phoenix last November.

At Spelman, Sariah also participated in an immersive two-week-long study abroad program at the University of Ghana, an experience she describes as one of the most meaningful of her life.

After graduating in the spring, Sariah will head back to Colorado to work again

"When I meet a young girl who's thinking about going to OSS, I tell her that she'll learn perseverance and determination. She'll know what to do if she gets discouraged, because OSS teaches you to find a Plan B, and then a Plan C."

Not only is Sariah a part of the OSS family - her whole family is too! Sister Johnna '15 graduated a year before Sariah. Then there's cousin Jordan '15, and Sariah's niece who will be OSS-ready in two years. "She may not know it yet, but she's going to OSS too," laughs Sariah.

for the University, this time in a full-time research position. And then, as Sariah has planned all along, she'll enter medical school.

Sariah says the culture of excellence she has experienced at Spelman reminds her very much of her years at OSS. "I'm so

grateful to Our Sisters' School. It really gave me the foundation of who I am today. It is where I found myself. I feel like that's where I gained my confidence: confidence in my schoolwork and confidence as a person. Wherever I go now, I take that with me."



Left to right: Mariah '16, Lesley '19, Amelia '18, and Sariah '16 (in 8th grade)

to OSS. From the time she was a little girl, Sariah wanted to be a doctor. After graduating from OSS and entering high school, Sariah was dreaming of becoming a surgeon.

Sariah Hyacinth '16

Sariah Hyacinth knew what she wanted

for her life path even before she came

Like so many OSS students, Sariah isn't just chasing a dream - she's making it happen. Currently in her final year at Spelman, Sariah is earning a Bachelor of Science in Health Science. An internship last summer at the University of Colorado's pediatric cardiology lab piqued Sariah's interest in biomedical research.



Katelyn Rapoza

Everyone has a Math Brain!

Katelyn Rapoza joined Our Sisters' School in 2013. She teaches seventhand eighth-grade math and is head of the math department. She is also the Student Council Co-Advisor.

"There are so many different ways to make math accessible," says teacher Katelyn Rapoza. "I use my relationships with the kids to help them explore and understand the idea that everyone has a math brain. I try to show them that I truly believe in them."

Katelyn teaches the same students for both seventh and eighth grade, providing continuity as they build skills over a long period of time. She starts with low stakes at the beginning of seventh grade, presenting problems that may take an entire class period – or longer – to solve, but that won't be reflected in their grades. "We're going to solve a problem," she tells them, "and it's going to be really hard, and it's going to require you to use a lot of resources and to ask your peers for help."

Solving these complex problems can be frustrating for students.
But Katelyn firmly believes that modeling ways to cope with

frustration is an important part of the learning experience. "A lot of adults don't know how to manage frustration!" she observes.

She teaches students to break big problems down into small steps. Each time students get stuck at one stage or another, she asks them, "How do you get past this part of being frustrated? How can you work through the emotions that you feel when you're frustrated because you're also feeling sad or not smart enough?" She calls this process "productive struggle."

Katelyn encourages her students to think of all the things they could try before they ask for her help. This is part of her strategy. "You don't have a teacher for life," she advises them. "But there are people who know things." Knowing how to seek out those people and resources is part of the process.

She wants her students to feel confident in their ability to solve math problems, and to view acquiring math skills as a process that anyone can successfully adopt. Katelyn likes to help them see where their strengths lie, and that "there are lots of different topics and entry points in math. Just because one thing is tripping you up and frustrating you doesn't mean you don't know math."

Above all, Katelyn's hope is "that they always keep the door open and feel okay about not knowing." She wants students to understand that learning is a lifelong process, and the result is valuable: "Even if this is hard, I can build the skills to do it."



Katelyn with Rayn '21



Katelyn with Karla '18



Gale Beaton VOLUNTEER

When Gale Beaton's children were young, she shifted from working in public health to school nursing as a way to balance work and parenting responsibilities. After retiring from Wellesley Middle School, Gale and her husband Tom returned to her Dartmouth roots. Here, her passion for service and staying active quickly led her to begin volunteering with local organizations like the Association for the Relief of Aged Women, where her mother had volunteered when Gale was young.

In 2016, after a chance encounter with OSS Head of School Sarah Herman, Gale became our school nurse consultant. Right away, her superb organizational skills shone as Gale established essential systems for student health. During the exceptionally challenging pandemic years, Gale was invaluable as we developed strategies and plans for in-person learning, reopening, communicating the protocol and procedures with families, and monitoring contact cases.

And that's not all! Every week, Gale also tutors our students in math. She wants to help them develop a strong foundation for meeting the challenges of high school and beyond. Gale says that OSS, with its focus on joyful learning and hands-on experiences, truly equips students to navigate the real world.

We are very grateful for Nurse Gale whose work and dedication to our students and the School genuinely benefit the well-being of the entire OSS community.



Serge Moniz P'19 PARENT, TRUSTEE

Serge Moniz came to New Bedford from Senegal at just three years old. In 1998 he graduated from Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, returning a decade later as a teacher. Last summer, he also became head coach of the girls' basketball team.

A father of four, Serge first became involved with OSS when his daughter began attending school here. Paige '19 is now a freshman at Elmhurst University studying psychology. Serge has remained active at OSS, now serving as a trustee

on our board. He is also co-president of the Greater New Bedford Educators Union and a representative to the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

Serge plays many roles, yet some common threads underlie them all. He has a deep commitment to serving the youth of his community. He is a strong believer in the importance of a good education. And he has an equally strong belief in what students can achieve, especially when they're encouraged and challenged.

These threads quickly connected Serge to OSS, which he describes as helping to "make our city a great place to be."

Though he never doubted Paige's ability and drive, Serge believes OSS "sped her progress" by providing a quality educational foundation, and keeping her motivated and challenged. He also values the way OSS engages parents in their children's education.

There's another unifying thread that ties together Serge's work as a parent, teacher, coach, community leader, and OSS advocate. "It's all about helping kids go beyond what they think is possible," he says.

"No other school I know offers these kinds of classes to share your voice and say what's on your mind."

Sophia '23

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"Our school challenges us A LOT! But I feel like it reall just prepared me for what's coming ahead like high school and college."

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Zoe '26 Rana '26 Left to right: Mr. Spencer, Arabella '26, Ms. Pires '12 OUR SISTERS' SCHOOL | 7

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July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

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Left to right: Kaylee '27, Zahra '27 and Kylin '27

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"From the beginning, since I came to OSS. I knew it was special and I had to take advantage of what this school would offer me."

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Zeiterion Performing Arts Center

Virginia & Peter Ziobro

Vineyard Wind

Peter Berg Fund This memorial fund was established by Peter's family, friends and classmates to honor his commitment and interest in supporting OSS students and graduates. Lisa & John Batter Whitney Beals Rhea Brooks Suzan & Christopher Burns Suzanne Campion & Ray Carvey

Jennifer & Joe Gould Carol & Bob Lincoln Teza & Carter Lord Mary Ellen & Frederick McCarthy The Parrot Family Carolyn Spengler Marjorie & Donald Swift Stephanie & Richard Zimmerman



"...I learned that if I can make even just a small amount of personal growth in a week, I could make a lot of growth in four years. From there I set off on my OSS journey, to become the best version of myself I could be.

Hannah '23

In Memory of Mark Goulding

Lynn & John Seymour

Martha & Michael Sullivan

Marcy Wintrub & Duane Barton

Lisa Schmid Alvord & Joel Alvord

Janice & Phil Sieg

Joseph Slomka

Margot Stone

Ariana Wohl

In Memory of

Millie Perkins

Julie Cordonnier

Anne & James Righter

Christine & Paul Schmid

Allison & George Wood

Toni Gal

Dick Perkins

Lisa Schmid Alvord & Joel Alvord

estate plans. Mary Berg Richard Bradspies Lisa Schmid Alvord & Joel Alvord Tobey Eugenio Talbot Baker Jr. Linda & Peter Fenton Kim & Steve Gladstone Tom Boreiko Tracy & Sam Hallenbeck Laurie & Hal Curtis Sarah Herman Janet Egan Betsy & Rusty Kellogg Marion Kimball Bunny Garnick Susan Knight & Evan Friedman Georgie Goulding Carlene LeBlanc Sarah Herman Sally & Michael Lemelin Kav Lindsav Kurtz Family Fund Margaret McSweeny Betsy Lawrence Jane & John Quinn Martha & Michael Sullivan Gail & Pete Richmond Deborah Williams Amy Sanders

> Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of this report let us know of any errors at 508.994.1255 or email

Alison Coolidge Boreiko & Linda & Peter Fenton Donna Jeffers & Robert Hampson

True North Legacy Society

OSS is deeply grateful to those who

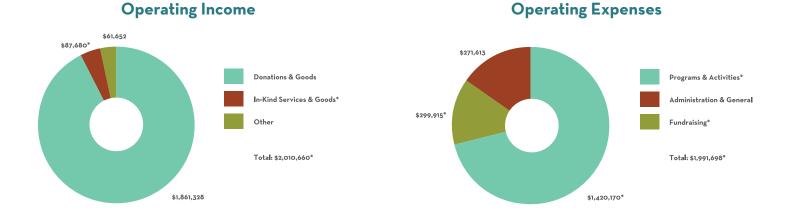
are remembering the School in their

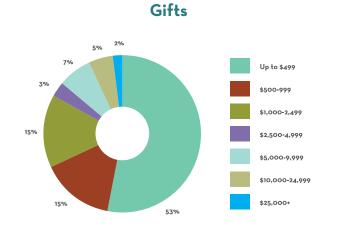
* deceased

Please accept our apologies and ggoulding@oursistersschool.org.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

We send our deep gratitude to all of our generous supporters. As a single-sex school in Massachusetts, OSS is not eligible for state funding or charter status. We rely solely on the support of our friends, our community, and grants from foundations and corporations. We continue to focus on investing in our people and programs, and ensuring the future security of our beloved school for our students.





"Throughout my years here, I've learned so many valuable skills, and OSS has helped me prepare for my next journey. for the past four years."

I'm beyond grateful to have been given this opportunity

Aden '23



Our mission, as an independent, tuition-free, non-sectarian middle school, is to educate and inspire economically disadvantaged girls from the New Bedford area. Our Sisters' School empowers students to step into the future with valuable life skills and a mindset of achievement and excellence by providing a safe, supportive and academically challenging environment.

Founding Chair Emerita: Lisa Schmid Alvord

Elizabeth Huidekoper, William Prescott

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Christina Turner

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Young Un

FY 2023

Pamela Beck

Mary Berg

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Left to right:

Seated: Martha Sullivan, Lisa Schmid Alvord (Founding Chair Emerita), Elizabeth Kellogg, Marcy Wintrub, William Prescott (Honorary Trustee), Ravana Grace

Serge Moniz P'19, Kerry Lynch, Alice Flint, Young Un, Jane Reynolds, Princess Bomba, Mary Berg, Cecelia Armstrong, Joe McDonough, Merita Hopkins, Tony Jaccaci

Not pictured:

Alison Coolidge Boreiko, Hope Jeffrey, Per Lofberg, Faith Morningstar



*Includes volunteer services valued at \$62.062 Note: unaudited figures; gifts to sustainability fund not included

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ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT

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Sianna '26. Vera '26

Sa'nai '26