

ROYAL LEGACY

FALL 2022

Building on the Legacy



Marina La Mendola Class of 2026

Carolina Diago Class of 1993

The Legacy Continues...

LINKING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF ILS FAMILIES

1993



2022



This particular space is where Carolina Diago, Class of 1993, spent so much of her time at ILS. Her best friend, Linda Vinci, Class of 1992, and Caro would meet here after school almost daily. That's why she was so happy to recreate this photo with her daughter, Marina La Mendola, Class of 2026, in the same place. Marina has also found a home at ILS, and having her here, finding her own hang-out spots, makes Carolina so happy as her daughter can now recreate her own memories, in her own spaces, with her own friends.

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Sr. Kim Keraitis



Dear Alumni and Friends of Immaculata-La Salle High School:

I recently read an article in *Legacy Arts Magazine*, by Bill High, co-founder and CEO of The Signatry: A Global Christian Foundation. In his article, he stresses the importance of raising our children to be interdependent rather than independent, helping them realize they are part of a bigger story and drawing value from that story, appreciating it, and learning from it.

The Immaculata-La Salle community understands this well, and has witnessed for over 60 years that building on a legacy is not just about what one creates, but about the story that one is a part of and shares in-the values, the memories, the sacrifices and generous giving which have been woven into a legacy of an educational commitment and care for young people, forming them to be good Christians and honest citizens.

Our current multi-million dollar endeavor to build much needed athletic facilities and playing fields began with a vision from alumni and families who remain connected to the bigger story and purpose of Immaculata-La Salle. That vision has spurred us on to the hard work of planning, communicating, and fundraising to help make it a reality. With your help and support, we have been able to transform our 'school by the bay' into a modern, technologically-advanced institution of learning, while at the same time preserving our Catholic values and school legacy. Our new athletic facilities and playing fields will match the level of excellence we have established in our classrooms.

Our Immaculata Alumni and La Salle Alumni, truly define Immaculata-La Salle High School. The Salesian Sisters, administrators, teachers, and students who now walk the same hallways you once did, continue to build on your legacy! With all that we do, just as you once experienced, Immaculata-La Salle is a place where students from all walks of life can exceed the bounds of their expectations and achieve their greatest goals.

Thank you for supporting us as we continue Building on the Legacy!

Please be assured of the Salesian Sisters' daily remembrance in prayer for each of you and your families, using the words of Ralph H. Blum, "May there be a calmness to a life lived in gratitude, a quiet joy."

God bless!

Sr. Kim Keraitis, fma
Sr. Kim Keraitis, FMA
ILS Principal

Building on the Legacy... Through Our Alumni

ANTHONY YERO/ 2021



For over two years, his twin brother, Michael Yero, and Anthony have been covering Miami sports at an optimal level. After being credentialed for the University of Miami football and basketball teams, even taking a trip to Chicago for March Madness, they both started new positions at Rivals.Com as recruiting analysts for South Florida. Rivals is a national outlet owned by Yahoo, which allows them an opportunity to take their network, following, and brand to the next level.

At just 19, the sky is the limit for them.

Instagram accounts:
@anthonyyero, @305sportss,
@rivalsdotcom

SILVIA SCANDAR MAHAN/2001



She was hired as President and CEO of Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School in March 2021, a high school that serves only low-income students. Students work one day a week with various corporate partners in Silicon Valley. This year, she was named to Silicon Valley Business Journal's 40 under 40 list.

BRENY (DAPARRE) GARCIA/2001



Dr. Garcia was recently elected to serve as Grand Vice Archon (Vice President) of Phi Sigma Sigma, Inc. for the 2022-2024 term.

JULIAN CASTRO/2011



He landed an executive job in drama development at ABC Network. He works with writers and directors to develop the next new hits on broadcast TV. He is excited to be able to continue to showcase Latin characters on screen.



LIZETTE GARCIA/2008

She graduated ILS in 2008 and went on to Florida State University. She then continued to Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine where she graduated with honors in DMD. She then went on to do a general practice residency at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, NY. She is now the owner of her own dental practice. She practices general, cosmetic, and implant dentistry. Her private practice is in Miami Lakes, FL, located at 8060 NW 155 St Suite 200. You can follow her on Instagram at @dr.lizgarcia

Dr. Garcia and her staff on Invisalign Day.



MICHELLE SIERRA SCHULTZ/2007

She had a very complicated first pregnancy in 2020. Expecting twin boys, one of the boys developed a life threatening condition called fetal hydrops for which she underwent three in utero procedures in an effort to save his life. The third procedure caused an infection and ultimately pre-term labor at 31 weeks. Logan and Landon were born on June 8, but on June 10, 2020, Landon lost his fight and passed away in their arms. His brother Logan remained in the NICU for nearly two months, but was eventually “able to come home to us.” In Landon’s memory, they created a non-profit organization: Landon’s Legacy Inc. (www.LandonsLegacy.org) providing children and their families an inclusive recreational experience - adaptive sailing. In 2021, they were hit again with the news that their baby girl, Hailey, was also suffering from the same condition as Landon, as well as a congenital heart defect. Hailey, thankfully has made it home and is expecting to undergo open heart surgery this December 2022. God has played a tremendous role in helping them through these trying times and has given them the strength to comfort others experiencing child loss and/or child illness. They hope their story will empower others.



NATALIE QUADE/2017



She currently works as part of the Human Resources Team for Amazon. As a member of field HR, she deals with over 1,000 warehouse Associates on a daily basis - whether it be to correct their scheduled time balances, work with engagement/recognition, or deal with site improvements. There is never a dull moment. The workload is intense, but over her time working there she has grown as a leader. She finds all the challenges thrown her way to be worth it for her growth and development. Communication is key.

REBECCA ZLATKIN/2016



"This work is so meaningful to me. The impact you can make as a teacher just showing a child that you care is amazing. I remember my teachers, and I would like to be that influence, that safe person for kids."

ZUNY MEZA/2013



"I feel as though I spent the last ten years looking for a career and place of work that had an atmosphere of respect, consideration, and a high level of moral conviction that I had witnessed as a kid when I was in high school," said Zuny Meza. She is glad to be back because she knew that if she could ever find that somewhere, it would more than likely be at ILS.

ANNA M. FIGUEROA/1984



She was very proud to be nominated and awarded the 100 Women to Know in America award by this prestigious women's organization. She was thrilled to be counted among so many successful women entrepreneurs. She hopes she made ILS proud!

IZZY RENNELLA/2018



ILS Alumnus, Izzy Rennella, Class of 2018, completed "El Camino de Santiago" this past summer. She was part of a pilgrimage with the Servants of the Pierced Hearts, and walked 115 miles through Northern Spain.

PHILIP MUDD/1979



Former CIA Deputy Director of Counter terrorism, and ILS Alumnus, Class of 1979, Philip Mudd, engaged with ILS STEAM and Applied Global Leadership students, sharing stories about life in public service.



CHRISTY CASTELLANOS TORKILDSON/1974

She received her BSN from the University of Miami, her MSN from the University of Phoenix, and her Ph.D. from the University of California San Francisco. She has a post-graduate certificate in bioethics from the University of Missouri and Children's Mercy of Kansas City. Her areas of study are home and community-based services for children with complex medical conditions, access to care, interprofessional education, pet therapy, and the intersection of ethics and palliative care. She is the Director of the MSN - Public Health Nursing Program for Grand Canyon University, College of Nursing and Health Care Professions; the Director of the Children's Hospice and Palliative Care Coalition of California, and an ethics consultant at Banner University Medical Center - Phoenix. She chairs and is co-editor of the Pediatric e-Journal, a project of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), and serves as an editor for the Arizona Nurse quarterly journal. She is a Navy Nurse Corp Veteran and has been married for 37 years. She has four daughters, one son-in-law, and one granddaughter.



LUIS VALCARCEL/1977

High school sweethearts for 45 years since 1977, they celebrated their 40 year wedding anniversary in March 2022. They have four children and three grandchildren.



ANDRES LOPEZ/2013

He graduated from St. Thomas University College of Law in Miami, FL on May 2022. He was involved in the Intercultural Human Rights Law Review as its Symposium Editor. He hosted an international Symposium on the Death Penalty featuring multiple advocacy groups: His Excellency Ambassador Ahmed Fathalla, UN Human Rights Committee Chair; federal judge(s) from South America; and keynote speaker Sister Helen Prejean. *Graduation day photo with Andres Lopez in the middle surrounded by loving family.*

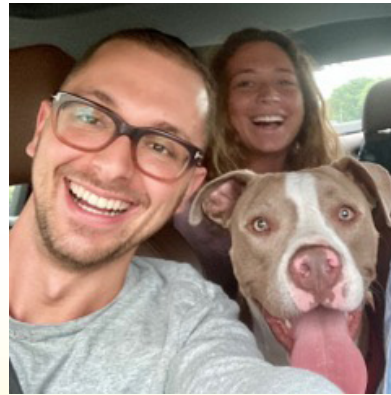


JULIAN RODRIGUEZ/1969



Julian Rodriguez, class of 1969, and ILS Board of Trustees Treasurer, visits beloved Brother Andres in New Jersey.

MARTIN SAAVEDRA/2014



Martin was working as an engineer in Colorado, and though he loved the state---great hiking!--he was not thrilled with the job which he found dull and repetitive. The pandemic hit, the state shut down, he returned to Miami, began thinking about teaching, and decided to apply to his alma mater.

Martin Saavedra joins his sister, Catalina, and his dog, Vincent, as they head to the airport to return to Colorado, Martin's former home.

COLIN CAMPBELL/2010



Colin Campbell, Class of 2010 and former student athlete, stops by the Lion's Den on his wedding day to take some photos with his beautiful bride, Erika.

PRAYING FOR ALUMNI WHO HAVE PASSED:

Arturo Alonso

Oscar Coto

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Maria Cristina Fernandez

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**LUIS G. FERNANDEZ CARRENO, MD,
KHS, KCOEG, FACS, FASAS, FCCP,
FCCM, FICS/1976**

Medical Director, Trauma Wound Care Prof. of Surgery, Dept. of Surgery, University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler, TX

Luis was named the University of Texas, Tyler School of Medicine Endowed Chair in Trauma Surgery. He shares how ILS helped shape him to pursue success - in his career and life.

"In large part, I would not be here if it wasn't for the great education and Catholic faith that I received at La Salle. Coach Grosso was and is a great coach, mentor, and I am blessed to call him my friend. He instilled in those of us who were lucky to play for him, to be true to one's self, be loyal to our family and friends, and never quit in the face of adversity. This ethic continues to serve many distinguished La Salle alumni, to this day. I want to thank my teachers and the ILS community. I would not have been able to achieve this without their efforts on my behalf."



ALUMNI WHO HAVE RECENTLY JOINED OUR STAFF



Melissa Capablanca c/o 2007

Zuny Meza c/o 2013

Martin Saavedra c/o 2014

Rebecca Zlatkin c/o 2016

Julio Soriano c/o 2019

Maritere Manso c/o 2021

Lourdes Nieto-Ramos c/o 2021

Gabriella Garcia c/o 2022

Cecilia Harding c/o 2022

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Peggy Youngblood

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Ofelia Villanueva

Legacy in Action

Josephine Novo: The Cuban Girl

Josephine Novo, ILS '22, documentarian, was born and raised in Miami to a mother who was also born and raised in Miami, and a father who though born in Cuba, grew up in South Florida. Novo displays remarkable fluency in her native language thanks to her parents who inculcated in her a love for the language and Cuban culture which explains how she was able to deliver such an impassioned speech before an audience of ILS and Operation Pedro Pan alums at the Pedro Pan Breakfast September 11, at the ILS Bayshore Ballroom.

A featured guest, she debuted her one-hour documentary, *This is Our Story: Immaculata-La Salle Operation Pedro Pan* the 60th Anniversary, last year. Beginning in March of her junior year, Novo worked tirelessly interviewing six Pedro Pans for over an hour each, touring the American Museum of Cuban Diaspora Pedro Pan exhibit for three hours, and then spending countless hours in post-production.

"Their stories really resonated with me," she recalled. Growing up in a very Cuban-centric home, she learned about the suffering in her parents' homeland. Stressing the importance of heritage and remembering your roots, Novo believes adamantly that if she ever becomes a parent, she intends to instill that same pride of heritage and knowledge of history in her own children.

As a child, she remembered visiting ILS's "next door neighbor," Mercy Hospital, where she was struck by a mural, long since painted over, which depicted the children of Pedro Pan, and left quite an impression on her. She would go on to learn that she had relatives who themselves arrived to the U.S. thanks to Operation Pedro Pan.

In preparation for a project to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Pedro Pan, she first spoke to Mrs. Cristina Brito, ILS Public Relations Coordinator, and a Pedro Pan alum. Brito thought she would be perfect because she was familiar with Novo's Cubanita cooking segments on LTV. For her part, Novo truly appreciates Brito's contribution, viewing it as instrumental.

"Mrs. Brito was an excellent resource, guiding hand, and so supportive, allowing me to make the documentary into my own vision," Novo said.





From left to right: Cristina Brito, Josephine Novo, and Colette Varese

From this experience, Novo has gleaned many valuable lessons. “I learned just how multi-dimensional stories can be. There are so many layers to the sort of abuse that exist in a communist system. Most people don’t understand what it means to not be able to speak until they tell you there are microphones in your home and on every block, there are spies,” she said.

One anecdote which struck her powerfully was that of Juan Pujol, a stalwart practicing Catholic who engaged in proselytizing. For expressing his beliefs, Pujol was arrested and beaten multiple times. “There is little respect for the Cuban constitution because they do not respect their own document. Even in the constitution, the government lists groups which may be, under Cuban law, justifiably persecuted,” she explained.

Groups such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, for instance, do not have the same rights as other Cuban citizens. Jehovah’s Witnesses are not allowed to attend school during the day or earn a diploma even after completing night school. Cuban authorities exclude them because they are not in line with the ultra-nationalist tenor of a regime which compels citizens to wear the colors of the flag on certain uniforms, such as those for school, and to salute the flag, activities

precluded for those who are practicing Jehovah’s Witnesses. The title for the documentary, *This is Our Story*, is derived from the sentiment Novo expressed in her remarks addressing the audience at the Pedro Pan Breakfast where she emphasized that Cuba’s story is unique and that no one understands the experience like a fellow Cuban.

So, what’s next for the budding filmmaker? For now, Novo is concentrating on finishing her Business Administration degree at FIU, followed by law school. She looks forward to putting her knowledge to work on behalf of causes she is fervent about, including a free Cuba, and full inclusion in the work force for those with disabilities.

“Our world is not built for the disabled. No one asks to not be able to work or to not be able to walk, or to be blind, or mute, or deaf, or intellectually disabled. As Catholics, as human beings, it is our job to help people who cannot advocate for themselves,” she said.

To see her documentary, follow this link:
<https://youtu.be/QLSxUoetXTE>.

Building on the Legacy...

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Building the Legacy

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Ms. Cristina Ramirez, Adviser

Ms. Ramirez is in her second year advising the Royal Courier. She also advises Inklings, the literary magazine, and serves as Media Department Chair where she collaborates with LTV and Signum yearbook.

LTV students Chiara Cannis, Alessandra Merino, Alfonsina Santucho, Joaquin Martinelli, and Royal Courier writer Alexandra Perez received accolades for their contributions to the annual Florida Scholastic Press Association Fall Digital Contest 2022.

"During the Best of the Best Broadcast presentation, I learned so many small details I did not know before," said Lara Bagshaw.

Bagshaw was also surprised to learn how many points they can lose in competitions for even small mistakes.

Merino and Santucho earned an All-Florida for Broadcast Show Opening; Merino, Santucho, Cannis, and Perez won an Honorable Mention for Student Life Photo, and Martinelli won an Excellent for Student Life Photo.

Gianna Ferrara, who like all the other ILS students attended Journalism Day at Florida International University for the first time, Monday, October 3, was very pleased with the experience.

"I learned so much at Journalism Day. My favorite presentation was the FIU professor who impressed upon us the importance of journalism, reminding us that it is the cornerstone of democracy," she said.

The list of attendees pictured were Martina Ottolino, Chiara Cannis, Nuria Dolz, Sarah Henriques, Camila Hermann, Susanne Mederos, Natalia Sabbagh, Lucas Barragan, Camila Egea, Mariana Triay, Lara Bagshaw, Martin de Armas, Daniella Coro, Isabelle Silva, Joaquin Martinelli, Peilin Aguilar, Juliette Egea, Gianna Ferrara, Katerina Garcia, Maya Garcia, Eliza Chandler, Lauren Boj, Bernadette Nieto-Ramos, Sebastian Loughlin, Gabriela Lopez, Ana Castillo, Antonella Velasquez, Hannah Brewster, Alfonsina Santucho, Monica Prieto, Colette Finley, and Alessandra Merino.

"I got to meet students from other high schools which was a lot of fun," said Martin de Armas.



Through Student Life



Global Leadership / Speaker

Former US Ambassador Leslie Rowe spoke to ILS students about her passion for diplomacy, the US State Department, life as an ambassador, and being on the frontlines of the global war against HIV, malaria, polio and other pandemics. Students in Global Leadership and STEAM Health Sciences classes were clearly inspired to serve.



Apple Distinguished School

We are excited to share that we have been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for the 2022-2025 school years! Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of innovation, leadership, and educational excellence. They use Apple technology to connect students to the world, fuel creativity, deepen collaboration, and make learning personal. Thank you to all who help shape our learning community and help us to achieve this incredible recognition!





National Merit

We recognize the following students who have been named Commended Students in the Class of 2023 National Merit Scholarship Program based on their PSAT scores. These students have received Letters of Commendation in recognition of their outstanding academic promise and for having demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success.

The Seniors receiving this honor are:
Danae Georgiadis
Fiorella Durand
Carolina Juara



Royals Debate

The ILS Royals Debate Team's Public Forum squad won 2nd place at the first tournament of the year! Mia Mena and Victoria Pla were undefeated at Ft. Lauderdale High School. Congrats to both Mia and Victoria on an amazing job.



2021-2022 Yearbook Team

has been inducted to the Walsworth Gallery of Excellence.

Our Yearbook sets the standard for scholastic journalism. We demonstrated a mastery of key elements that make up a yearbook. Our yearbooks will be displayed at workshops and prominently highlighted regional, state, and national conventions.

This is a huge achievement for this team for their hard work, dedication, and talent. #goroyals





Miami Heat's very own Jimmy Butler training at our Don Bosco Arena over the summer with ILS Head Basketball Coach, Derrick De La Grana



Ian Relief Efforts for Naples
ILS students gave to help relief efforts in Naples after hurricane Ian devastated Florida's west coast.



Senior Ilen Perez Valdes
spent time this summer at American University in Washington DC, completing an internship on advanced medicine.











FEBRUARY 11, 2023

7:00PM - MIDNIGHT

7:00PM Cocktail Reception & Check In

8:00PM Doors Open

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

BAYSHORE BALLROOM
3601 SOUTH MIAMI AVE
MIAMI, FL 33133



DRESS CODE:
MIAMI CHIC

21+ TO ATTEND



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