

## Holy Family's Annual Gift Drive

EACH YEAR, Holy Family Institute partners with local churches to provide gifts for the children and families we serve. We'd like to give a huge thank-you to the following churches for their generosity this year: St. Mary Magdalene Parish, St. Bede's School, Sacred Heart Church, Our Lady of the Lakes Parish, Divine Redeemer Parish, St. Catherine Laboure Parish, Resurrection Parish, Saints John and Paul Catholic Church, Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon, St. Killian Parish, St. Aidan Parish, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, and St. Nicholas Catholic Church.

## Support Holy Family with a Year-End Gift

### Visit our website or mail your gift

Please consider a gift to help Holy Family continue to provide needed services to our community or to help fund tuition for a talented student at Nazareth Prep. Visit our website at [www.hfi-pgh.org](http://www.hfi-pgh.org) to make an online gift or mail your gift in the envelope provided with this mailing.

### IRA Qualified Minimum Distribution

During this special time of year, our thoughts often turn to how we can help others. You may not know that you can use your retirement fund to help Holy Family in its mission to transform the lives of children and families. If you are age 72 or older and have a Traditional IRA, the government requires you to take a minimum distribution each year, on which you are taxed. However, you can avoid that tax by transferring funds, up to \$100,000, directly from your IRA to Holy Family. The direct transfer means that the value of the gift is not included in your total gross income for federal tax purposes. Consult your tax advisor or lawyer for specifics on how you could lower your tax bill and support Holy Family at the same time.

## Receive a Tax Credit Equal to 90% of Your Donation!

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE to repurpose your 2021 PA income taxes as scholarships benefitting Nazareth Prep students! Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program serves as a valuable means for individuals to invest in the education of Pennsylvania's youth. Individuals are invited to make a contribution to a registered Scholarship Organization. These contributions are then used to provide tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to eligible students attending a private school like Nazareth Prep. Credits are applied to the individual's PA tax liability for the tax year in which the contribution is made. *The tax credits awarded are equal to 90% of the contribution with a two-year commitment. That is the equivalent of providing a \$10,000 scholarship at a cost of \$1,000!*

To learn more about personal income tax credits or how to make a year-end gift, contact Susan Nespaul at 412-766-9020 x1084 or [nespaul.susan@hfi-pgh.org](mailto:nespaul.susan@hfi-pgh.org).

# HOLY LIGHT

CHRISTMAS 2021

A NEWSLETTER OF HOLY FAMILY INSTITUTE

## Nazareth Prep Students Begin Their Internships

ON SEPTEMBER 24th, Nazareth Prep's internship team hosted "Draft Day." All students in grades 10-12 gathered in the Rec Room to learn where they'd be interning for the '21-'22 school year. They were handed sealed papers rolled up into a scroll and after a prayer



Cashmere Ralph and Ariana McPherson

of blessing over the internship year and a countdown, students opened their papers to reveal their placements.

The internship matching process takes place behind the scenes and

begins just after the previous school year ends. Career coaches take into account the students' interests, previous internship placements, survey results, and behavior when assigning new internship placements. Students are welcome to request placements as well, and often have ongoing conversations with their Career Coaches about their plans for the future.

Last year, most internships were conducted virtually due to Covid-19. This year, nearly all are back in-person and began in late September or early October. We also have many new corporate partners for this year including #1 Cochran Automotive Group, Bloomfield Robotics, Columbia Gas, Dick's Sporting Goods, Federated Hermes, Go Green Construction, Jones Day, LANXESS, Mistick Construction, Pittsburgh Technical College, Simcoach Games, Tarax Service Systems, and Wabtec.

### Internship Spotlight:

#### Tracey McCants-Lewis and Savannah Lewis, Pittsburgh Penguins

WHEN SAVANNAH LEWIS stepped into the offices of the Pittsburgh Penguins just a few months into her sophomore year at Nazareth Prep, she knew she had much to learn. "I had never been in an office setting," she exclaimed.

Three years later, as Savannah received Nazareth Prep's St. Joseph the Worker Scholarship in recognition of exceptional internship performance, she attributed much of her growth to the influence of her internship mentor, Tracey McCants Lewis. "With Ms. McCants," Savannah said, "it was hands-on and personal. I went with her to all her meetings, I was with her on personal calls, and was actually in her office."

In her role as Vice President of Human Resources and Deputy General Counsel for the Penguins, McCants Lewis introduced Savannah to the complexities of the legal world. Much of their work together centered on the Lower Hill Redevelopment, a massive project that will have a substantial impact on one of Pittsburgh's most historic African American neighborhoods.

Years of discriminatory policies have stoked distrust of both private and government interests among Hill District residents. To find out how the redevelopment project could incorporate these concerns and garner community support, Savannah spoke with residents from all walks of life. She also interviewed stakeholders from the Penguins, the Hill Community Development Center, and the developers leading the project. Savannah described her work as: "Getting [residents] on the same page with the developers so they can work hand-in-hand, and [so] homeowners and business owners can feel like they're not being neglected and they still have a part in their area being rebuilt."

*Continued on page 3*

Savannah Lewis



Tracey McCants-Lewis





## Michael Sexauer Named as Holy Family Institute's New President

SISTER LINDA YANKOSKI, CEO, is pleased to announce that Michael Sexauer was promoted on July 1st to serve as President, following his role as Chief Operating Officer. Sexauer brings more than 30 years of marketing, fundraising, and non-profit management experience and held positions with other prominent Pittsburgh institutions, including PNC, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy before joining HFI in 2015.

"I am privileged to join in the legacy of Holy Family's mission to support families, promote racial equity, and empower students to succeed. I am inspired by our staff who visit families in their homes, provide counseling for those struggling with addiction, welcome migrant children from Central America and Afghanistan, and provide rigorous and personalized education for students.

I look forward to a partnership with Sister Linda, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, and the Board of Trustees to continue to meet the needs of our community through high quality and fiscally sound programs."



## Holy Family CFO, Mark Palastro, Awarded CFO of the Year!



The Pittsburgh Business Times recently announced their Chief Financial Officers of the Year and named Holy Family CFO Mark Palastro as one of 12 winners. Mark has worked as Holy Family Institute's CFO since January of 2010. His favorite parts of

working here are "the people and the organization's mission of helping children and families in the Pittsburgh region."

*Congratulations, Mark!*

## Long-Time HFI Employee to Assist Immigrant Children



Eric Gibson, who joined Holy Family Institute in 1990 as a Youth Care Worker, is moving on to the Journey of Hope Program to provide acculturation activities and skills to migrant children as they adapt to life in our country. Eric most recently served as the Senior Executive Career Coach at Nazareth Prep.

## 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Arthur J. Rooney, Sr. Courage House Luncheon

ON NOVEMBER 16TH, Holy Family Institute and the Pittsburgh Steelers hosted the 29th Annual Arthur J. Rooney, Sr. Courage House Luncheon honoring current Nazareth Prep student Taylor Dotson and Steeler #55 Devin Bush for overcoming challenges in their lives and showing extraordinary courage.

Holy Family's Courage Award Winner, Taylor Simone Dotson, is a junior at Nazareth Prep. Several years ago, at the age of 14, Taylor began to experience severe anxiety and depression. Through regular therapy and her faith in God, Taylor managed to overcome and learned how to better her mental health moving forward. She chronicled her story in her self-published book, *Finding Faith: Discovering Life Through Severe Anxiety and Depression*.

Devin Bush, this year's award winner from the Steelers, tore his ACL during the 2020 season in the Week 5 game against the Cleveland Browns. Over the last year, he has battled back

from that season-ending injury to return to his place in the middle of one of the League's toughest defenses.



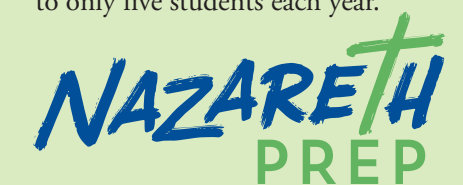
This year's Courage House Luncheon raised nearly \$160k for Holy Family Institute's social service and education programs, including Nazareth Prep. A special thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Jim Shorkey Auto Group, and the rest of our event sponsors. We'd also like to thank our volunteer planning committee and our event chair, Greta Rooney, for making the 2021 Courage House Luncheon a huge success. And, congratulations again to the award winners, Taylor and Devin!



## Nazareth Prep Students Begin Their Internships

*(continued from page 1)*

McCants Lewis had nothing but praise for Savannah's work. "This was a monumental task for the most seasoned professional," she said, "and Savannah handled it with ease and professionalism. Her confidence and presence have blossomed during our time together." It was for her work on the Lower Hill Redevelopment that Savannah earned the St. Joseph the Worker Scholarship, an honor awarded to only five students each year.



Although Savannah loved learning more about the neighborhood's history, her most treasured experiences involved legal projects – sitting in with McCants Lewis' clients and understanding the legal underpinnings of an influential organization. McCants Lewis also looked back fondly on the camaraderie the two had built. "My favorite memories with Savannah are our weekly check-in time over hot chocolate and coffee," she shared. "[It's a] time to share wins and opportunities from our last time together." After a recent check-in, Savannah reflected on how McCants' feedback made her feel: "Appreciated. Like I'm doing my best, and it shows."

After graduation, Savannah plans to attend law school and become a judge, a career aspiration that has been "[her] dream since third grade." McCants Lewis reflected on the last three years with grace and appreciation. "In my mentorship with Savannah, I've also had the opportunity for self-reflection and my own personal growth," she shared. "I strive to be a better role model for Savannah and therefore for myself. To be better, and do better."