

Goretti High scholars underscore Hagerstown's 'hub' status

By Paul McMullen

pmcmullen@CatholicReview.org

Twitter: @ReviewMcMullen

The achievers nominated for the Archdiocese of Baltimore's 25th annual Distinctive Scholars Convocation by St. Maria Goretti High School give credence to Hagerstown's reputation as the Hub City.

Yes, Rose Dever is a parishioner of St. Ann Parish, at the other end of a rambling Catholic campus on the north side of town. Leah Morgan, however, worships in the eponymous Pennsylvania town of Blue Ridge Summit, and Jacob Kuhn commutes more than 60 miles each way from his home in Bethesda.

Morgan makes her drive in a Mazda, Kuhn in a Nissan Altima in which he bets he's put "50,000 miles on in the last year and a half."

Going the distance has been worth it, as Morgan will next study pre-medicine at William & Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and Kuhn's Ivy League credentials earned him a spot at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

They were among the 60 high school seniors, three from each of the 20 high schools in the archdiocese, honored at the April 4 convocation at Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore.



Sixty seniors, three from each of the 20 high schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, were honored April 4 at Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore, site of the 25th annual Distinctive Scholars Convocation. (Courtesy Greg Malanowski/Archbishop Curley High School)

"You can't get out of a textbook the things I got at Goretti," said Kuhn, whose family worships at Holy Trinity Parish in Washington, D.C. "Learning how to deal with different types of people; that sense of faith and belief, coupled with great

academics, it was the best of both worlds.”

He was not exactly escaping a scholastic backwater when he transferred to Goretti from Walt Whitman High in Bethesda, historically one of the best public high schools in the U.S.

After an injury dashed his dreams of playing football at Whitman for his father, Jim, Kuhn took his basketball potential to Goretti, where he helped the Gaels share the Baltimore Catholic League regular season title with Mount St. Joseph High School. The 6-foot-6-inch Kuhn was a second-team BCL all-star.




Bishop Adam Parker offers a blessing at the April 4 Distinctive Scholars Convocation hosted by Archbishop Curley High School. (Courtesy Greg Malanowski/Archbishop Curley High School)

Morgan, meanwhile, said that Goretti was her closest Catholic option.

A parishioner of St. Rita in Blue Ridge Summit, Pa., she headed west to attend kindergarten through grade 6 at St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School in Waynesboro, Pa., then east to Mother Seton School in Emmitsburg for grades 7-8.

A member of the National, Spanish and Thespian Honor Societies, she’s been editor of the yearbook; led Kairos retreats; and ran and swam for the Gaels.

 Dever, left, who was unable to attend the convocation, was a cross country and swimming teammate of Morgan’s; captained the volleyball team; held several offices in student government; and has logged many hours volunteering with the Humane Society of Washington County.

Service, along with Scripture and spirituality, comprised the three “S”s stressed by Bishop Adam J. Parker during his remarks to the Distinctive Scholars.

“You all have the power to build up the body of Christ,” Bishop Parker said. “Go, and make a difference.”

Archdiocese of Baltimore 2017 Distinctive Scholars

Archbishop Curley High School: Delondrae Carter, Matthew Scheffel, Michael Waugh

Archbishop Spalding High School: John Kimble, Olivia Simmons, Jack Stump

Bishop Walsh School: Jillian Courtney, Rachael Duncan, Abigail Lapid

Calvert Hall College High School: Emlyn Davies, Timothy Dragonette, Christopher Miller

The Catholic High School of Baltimore: Shannon Lord, Elena Mehiel, Sierra Zittle

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School: Taylor Anderson, Akeem Lyne, Bria Thomas

St. Frances Academy: Maikira Hardy, Jihaad McDonald, Natalie Thomas

Institute of Notre Dame: Maeve McCarthy, Wabathi Ngecu, Abigail Wyand

The John Carroll School: Edward Benner, Nicholas Hinke, Ianna Pirozzi

St. John's Catholic Prep: Molly Elspas, Haylee Orlowski, Michael Wohlfarth

Loyola Blakefield: Andrew Barker, Paul Kinkopf, Jacob McErlean

St. Maria Goretti High School: Rose Dever, Jacob Kuhn, Leah Morgan

St. Mary's High School: Annabelle Hutchinson, Jada Ito, Michael Ruland

Maryvale Preparatory School: Jacqueline Blair, Mya Buschman, Hannah Laue

Mercy High School: Christine Joy Escobar, Ashley Wagner, Catherine Zurarte

Mount de Sales Academy: Rachael Huber, Barbara Syski, Sarah Witt

Mount St. Joseph High School: Jonathan Harrison, Michael Stromberg, Jordan Woo

Notre Dame Preparatory School: Kennedy Monaco, Emily Sann, Grace Sullivan

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School: Christopher Ashby Jr., Benjamin Kovalick, C.

Anthony Le

The Seton Keough High School: Samantha Benton, Miejo Dambita, De'Ara Amon Graves

For more stories about Catholic education, click here.