

SAVIO NOW

April 2024



TEACHER OF THE YEAR:
Mrs. Alanna Heyl recognized for
commitment to Savio, students

page 8

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Dear Savio Family and Friends,

Welcome to the latest edition of “Savio Now!” We are in our second year of providing a quarterly magazine and we hope you enjoy the information that is shared with you. Our goal is to provide a summary of events that have happened since the last issue and a preview of what lies ahead. Every event and every upcoming activity would not fit well in a quarterly publication, so we encourage you to access our social media messages, website, and Eagle Update along the way.

In this issue, you will read about our cover story and celebrate Mrs. Alanna Heyl as the Texas Catholic High School Teacher of the Year. We also include information about the Lenten journey we have been on as we look forward to the Easter Season and the celebration we have each day for Jesus’s sacrifice and love for us. Additional information is provided about our students’ hard work in academics and participation in team competitions. We also announce the honorees chosen for the Savio Heritage Award and Savio Athletic Hall of Fame Award.

Many people, working with purpose, passion, and persistence make all of this happen. We give thanks to our parents, guardians, teachers, support staff, Advisory Board, and all others who in some way support our beloved school.

We can see the finish line of the 2023-2024 school year and challenge ourselves to not only cross it, but do so with energy, hard work, and momentum. Your ongoing prayers and support are felt and appreciated.

Thank you and God bless!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Cullen".

TIM CULLEN | PRESIDENT





DID YOU KNOW?

ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL HAS ANNOUNCED THE HONOREES FOR THE INAUGURAL 2024 SAVIO HERITAGE AWARD AND THE NEW SAVIO ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME AWARD.

Awardees will be recognized at a special ceremony on May 10th in the St. Dominic Savio gymnasium.

SAVIO HERITAGE AWARD

C.J. "Dutch" and Bernadette Kellerman

(posthumously) Their time, talent and treasure were necessary to make the vision of our Catholic school a reality. They spent countless hours collaborating with Bishop Aymond and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in gaining the much-needed support and involvement for Savio to be built.



Tom Bierschenk

His vision was to turn the pasture adjoining Savio's campus into an athletic complex. Tom gave of his own time and resources to make sure the vision for the athletic facilities came to fruition.



ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME AWARD

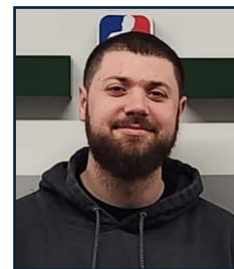
Caleigh Johnson

Caleigh was an accomplished multi-sport student-athlete in volleyball, swimming, and basketball at Savio, was voted Female Athlete of the Year, and was a four-year varsity multi-sport athlete at Smith College. Upon returning to Austin, she became involved in helping the Savio volleyball program as a coach.



Kevin Owens

After a successful basketball career at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School logging 750 career points with 1,000 rebounds, Kevin became a coach in college and overseas in China. He transitioned to a video coordinator at the professional level and currently is the head video coordinator for the NBA Milwaukee Bucks.



March for Life

Students stand up for life at national rally in D.C.

St. Dominic Savio students took a four-day pilgrimage for March for Life to Washington, D.C. in January. After arriving Wednesday evening the students' pilgrimage began Thursday morning with a special trip to the White House. Thanks to a Savio parent and our local congressman for setting up this great opportunity. The self-guided tour of the East Wing of the White House allowed students to learn about the history of the different rooms and their various uses. Included in the tour were the East Room, Blue Room, Green Room, and the State Dining Room. The rooms are filled with historical artwork, including the official portraits of many of our past presidents.

In the evening students participated in the Vigil Mass for Life at the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of Catholic University of America. On Friday morning, students participated in the Life Fest Youth Rally hosted by the Knights of Columbus and the Sisters of Life. In the afternoon students marched and prayed in the heavy snow from the National Mall to the U.S. Capitol and U.S. Supreme Court Buildings.

The students marching and praying gave witness to the essential teaching of the Catholic Faith that all human life is sacred. Before traveling back on Saturday, the students paid a visit to one of the newest museums in DC, the Museum of the Bible. 🔥



Mardi Gras parade brings Fat Tuesday festivities to Savio

Students from all families at Savio created a Mardi Gras Parade with individual floats made by hand. They paraded around Holy Family Catholic School bringing joy to the students with movie-themed floats.

Bos earned the most overall points at 44, with Angelus a close second at 39. Leo earned 29 and Aquila 24. St. Padre Pio was the winning Family followed by St. John Paul II and St. Joan of Arc. The final judges' scores are listed below.

Padre Pio (Aladdin)	88
St. JP2 (Ratatouille)	87
St. Joan of Arc (Star Wars)	87
St. Blaise (Despicable Me)	85
St. Patrick (Rio)	81
St. Anthony (Coco)	80
St. Francis (The Lorax)	80
St. Maximilian Kolbe (Finding Nemo)	80
St. Therese of Lisieux (Trolls)	78
St. Thomas Aquinas (Avengers)	76
t. Lawrence (How to Train Your Dragon)	73
St. Catherine (Cars)	72
St. Sebastian (Lilo & Stitch)	69
St. Nicholas (Up)	65
St. Mother Teresa (Frozen)	65
St. Philomena (Little Mermaid)	62



ASH WEDNESDAY





Iron Eagles continue as strong competitors at TAPPS

The robotics season began in September when this year's challenge was first announced. Since then the teams have been meeting most weekdays from 4:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. with a few late night meetings to get ready for a competition.

The teams were part of the X-Treme League hosted by KIPP Collegiate in Austin. The league events consisted of three regular league meets ending with a league championship. From the league championship, 6272 Iron Eagles Prime advanced directly to the Area Championship as part of the winning alliance. 3708 Iron Eagles Optimus advanced to the Semi-Area event from which they advanced to the Area Championship. 8814 Iron Eagles Bumblebee advanced to Semi-Area, but was not able to advance to the Area Championship.

At the Area Championship, both 3708 and 6272 formed good alliances with other teams and were able to advance to the State Championship in March. Unfortunately, the teams did not have the same luck with good alliances at the state event, and therefore, did not advance to the World Championship.

Competition will continue with both teams competing at the TAPPS Robotics State Championship on April 6 in Waco.

The teams are eternally grateful to their mentors. Mike Butler helped establish the team in 2008 and continues to support them. He is now retired from National Instruments. Mike Gregoriois also a founding mentor that has continued to support our teams. Mr. Gregoriois works at Flex Manufacturing. The team programming guru is Scott Barnes (Señor Scott). He is employed by Oracle and has not only helped the teams with programming, but also manufactures custom parts in this home shop. Savio is very lucky to have these dedicated industry mentors.



Team Awards for 2024

(to date)

3708 Optimus

League Awards

Design Award - 2nd

Finalist Alliance - Captain

Think Award - 3rd

Area Awards

Control Award - 2nd

Winning Alliance - 1st pick

6272 Prime

League Awards

Connect Award- 3rd

Think Award - 2nd

Winning Alliance - 1st pick

Area Awards

Winning Alliance - 2nd pick

Innovate Award - 3rd

8814 Bumblebee

League Awards

Design Award - 1st

Semi - Area Awards

Think Award - 1st

International students thrive at Savio

Most of us cannot imagine leaving our family and friends to attend high school in a different country, but for Elli Hoa, Ella Xiao, Jim Lu, and Joy Yan that is only the first step in deciding to attend St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School in Austin, Texas when you live in China.

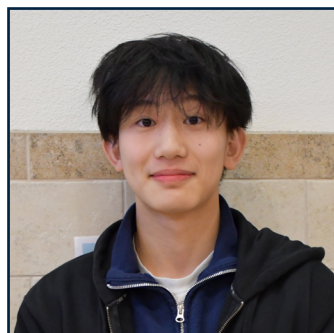
“It was an easy decision for me to come here because my sister was educated in the U.S. before me,” said Elli Hoa, a Savio senior, who committed to New York University (NYU) following graduation this spring. “There’s a better education and less pressure here.”

Hoa arrived in the United States for seventh grade from Harbin, China, which is the capital of Heilongjiang, the northernmost province of China. She currently sees her parents every six months when they rotate to visit.

When Ella Xiao, an only child, arrived at St. Dominic Savio as a sophomore, she didn’t know anyone. At home in Guangzhou, the southernmost region of China, her mother’s friend worked with the founder and CEO of Premier Education Partners (PREP), Mr. Ed Wu, which is how she found out about the study abroad program.

“It was a culture shock for me, but I studied at an international school back home and was planning to attend college in the United States anyway,” said Ella Xiao, who wants to attend NYU but is undecided about her major. “In the U.S. my English has improved and I learned a lot of slang.”

The students say that China is strict about what is said on social media and criticizing the government in any way is forbidden, so they appreciate the freedom to “speak up” in the United States.



Jim Lu



Joy Yan

With advancements in technology, international students use WeChat to communicate with family, as in the case of Jim Lu, who has an 11-year-old brother along with his parents in Wuxi, a city near Shanghai in Eastern China.

Lui has been coming to the United States for education since eighth grade.

“I’ve been in the same host family for years,” said Jim Lu, a Savio junior, who also shares the host home with Ella, Elli, and Joy. “It’s nice because there is always someone around.”

Lu says he wants to stay in Austin for college and plans to attend the University of Texas with an eye toward physical therapy.

The host family is Mr. Donald Su, who has been working with students from China for years.

“We enjoy being a host family,” said Donald Su. “To see them transition from being reliant to self-sufficient, fearful about the future to full of confidence and expectation is truly a joy.”

When sophomore Joy Yan was looking for a school in the United States, he used Google to find St. Dominic Savio from an Island off the coast of South Korea called Jeju, a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site.

“I had many American friends on the Island, so my English was very good,” said Joy Yan, who arrived at Savio last year. Joy became involved in cross country, soccer, and track, and plays guitar and chess in his free time.

The next time you run into Elli, Ella, Jim, or Joy, be sure to include them in your activities as they rely on their friends as their family here in the U.S.



Elli Hoa



Ella Xiao

Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Mrs. Alanna Heyl, Christian Outreach teacher

In 2001, when Mrs. Alanna Heyl graduated as part of the first class of Cedar Park High School, there was no way she could have foreseen what God would have in store for her life.

In hindsight, one might see there was a plan for Mrs. Heyl to become not just a teacher, but a theology teacher, followed by the theology department chair, as well as a wife, mother of four children, and eventually the 2024 Catholic High School Teacher of the Year, as selected by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops (TCCB).

After meeting the man who would be her future husband, Danny, through a mutual friend at St. Thomas More, the pair would continue to date long-

distance while she completed her undergraduate degree in Theology at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas.

"I knew absolutely no one when I decided to go to school there, but I knew it was the college for me the minute I stepped onto campus," said Mrs. Heyl.

After obtaining a Master's in Theology at the University of Dallas, Mrs. Heyl went to work for St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church in Pflugerville as the Director of Religious Education and then stayed home for a few years when her oldest two children were very little. During this time she volunteered with a group to help bring TEC (Together Encounter

Christ) Retreats to the Diocese of Austin. It was through this retreat program that she heard about a job opening at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School nearly 12 years ago.

"Father Daniel Liu, the full-time chaplain and Theology teacher at Savio, shared that he was being reassigned by the Diocese to another location and there was going to be an opening at the school, which he thought might be a good fit for me," said Mrs. Heyl, who had never taught in a formal environment.

Once in the role, Mrs. Heyl was a natural fit in the classroom and it was also a chance to develop the faith life for a very young school. "It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build





new programs and ministries to further the culture and Catholic identity of the school,” since it was only the fourth year the school was open. Over the years she had a part in developing Imago Christi Day as a service event, the Senior Retreat, the Timothy Team, Christian Outreach, the House System, and the Senior Project.


As the teacher of Christian Outreach at St. Dominic Savio, Mrs. Heyl helps her students to learn about Catholic social teaching and plan Imago Christi Day from the ground up each year. In Theology IV, she leads the students through learning about World Religions and

Catholic Spirituality and Prayer, which includes the ideas of vocation, hearing God’s call in their lives, and how they can serve others with their unique

gifts and talents.

“I love all of the students, but the seniors, in particular, are making some big life decisions,” she said. “I like being able to help them figure out what the future might look like for them and what role their faith will play in that.”

There are many leadership opportunities at Savio, she adds, and by their senior year you can really see the students mature to where they work wonderfully together as a team, use each of their strengths, take initiative, and problem-solve along the way.

Perhaps we can all come to believe that God is truly guiding our lives with wisdom and purpose, leading us on the right path. 

Opposite page: Mrs. Heyl coordinated a group from Savio to travel to World Youth Day in Poland in 2016.

Above: Mrs. Heyl with her family.

Below: Mrs. Heyl with her husband, Danny.





EAGLE UPDATES

As the curtains close on another thrilling season of sports, it's time to reflect on the achievements and memories that have defined our athletic journey this year. From the pool to the basketball court, and from the soccer field to the hearts of our dedicated fans, our teams have showcased resilience, determination, and extraordinary talent throughout the season.

SWIM TEAM MAKES A SPLASH:

Our swim team has once again demonstrated their prowess in the pool, culminating in an outstanding second-place finish in the state of Texas. Led by our exceptional female athletes, their dedication and hard work have propelled them to new heights, earning accolades and admiration every stroke of the way. Their commitment to excellence is a testament to our coaches and the spirit of our program, and we couldn't be prouder of their remarkable achievement.



GIRLS BASKETBALL SHINES:

On the hardwood, our girls' basketball team has left an indelible mark, securing a commendable second-place finish in the district. Their journey didn't end there, as they showcased their mettle in the playoffs, facing strong opponents at Grapevine Faith. Despite the challenges, they displayed remarkable skill and sportsmanship!

BOYS SOCCER DOMINATES:

Our boys' soccer team has written a story of dominance. Winning all but one game in the district, they showcased their skill and determination on the field. Their remarkable journey saw them travel to Waco to defeat Cristo Rey in penalties then again to face Grapevine Faith in Regional Playoffs.



BOYS BASKETBALL GROWS:

Although our boys' basketball team didn't have a winning season in terms of victories, their spirit and camaraderie have been nothing short of exceptional. Through every victory and defeat, their resilience and dedication serve as a testament to the true essence of sportsmanship and teamwork.

GIRLS SOCCER OVERCOMES:

Facing a challenging district season, our girls' soccer team exhibited resilience and positivity. Finishing third in the district, they battled fiercely against tough opponents. Their unwavering determination and positive attitude have been a source of inspiration to us all, reminding us of the true spirit of sportsmanship and perseverance.



A Model of Excellence in Football Leadership

It is with great enthusiasm that the administration of St. Dominic Catholic High School introduces you to our new head football coach, Malcom Brown. Coach Brown brings with him a wealth of experience, knowledge, and a sterling track record that promises to guide our football program to new heights.



As we transition to the highest division in TAPPS - 6A, Coach Brown's leadership couldn't have come at a more opportune time. His wealth of experience as a player and a leader equips him with the insight and acumen necessary to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

Born in Brenham, Texas, Coach Brown attained star status as a defensive tackle at the University of Texas. His journey from the college gridiron to the grandest stage of them all, the Super Bowl, is a testament to his dedication, perseverance, and unparalleled skill.

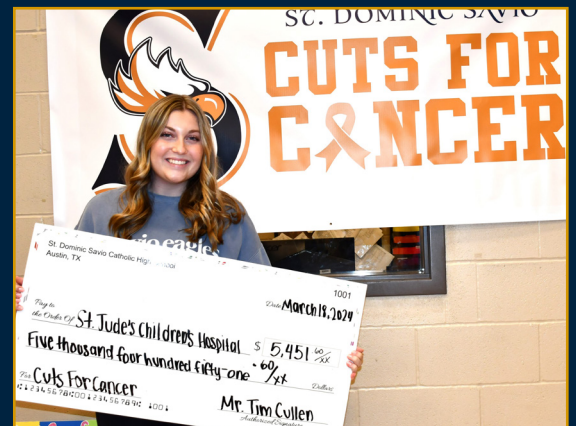
Having graced the field in three Super Bowl appearances, emerging victorious in two, Coach Brown embodies the epitome of excellence in football. His on-field achievements not only showcase his remarkable talent but also underscore his understanding of what it takes to succeed at the highest level.

Beyond his accolades and achievements, Coach Brown's commitment to faith, character, discipline, and sportsmanship sets him apart as a role model both on and off the field. His passion for the game is infectious, and his dedication to nurturing not just skilled athletes, but also well-rounded young men, resonates deeply with our school's values.

As we welcome Coach Malcom Brown to our family, we do so with great anticipation and excitement for the journey ahead. Together, under his guidance and mentorship, we are poised to write the next chapter of success in our football program's storied legacy.

Cuts for Cancer

The St. Dominic Savio Cheerleading Team held its annual Cuts for Cancer on March 18 to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In addition to \$5,451 raised, more than 18 adults and children agreed to have their cut as a donation for future wigs. The wigs are made for those battling hair loss.





CAN they build it?

CANstruction competition contributes to cause

As part of the curriculum for 3D modeling, students are asked to conceptualize and model design solutions using the Design Process developed by the University of Texas. Canstruction offers our 3D modeling students a unique opportunity to apply these principles while simultaneously contributing to a noble cause.

Whether it was brainstorming structural ideas or creating 3D models, “canstruction” proved to be quite a challenge. Each student was tasked with creating a presentation that included marketing slogans, sketches, models, constraints, deadlines, and judging guidelines.

This presentation also had to include a detailed spreadsheet of the total cost of the project along with the potential points each House could acquire. All in all, our 3D modeling students were able to pitch designs that led to a contribution of over 2,393 canned goods valued at \$3,045 in food donations to the St. Louis Food Pantry. A project that helps us develop the very servant leaders that we at Savio aspire to deliver.





*Help us unlock the future for our
next generation of students*

As the Director of Advancement and one who has been fundraising for Catholic education since 2008, I am passionate about what lies at the heart of our mission here at Savio: **keeping Catholic education affordable and accessible to all families who desire one.**

It is enrollment season, and we stand at a pivotal moment where your financial support can bridge the gap for students who dream of a St. Dominic Savio education. Your gift to the Eagle Fund will provide tuition assistance to families in need, ensuring that no student is denied the transformative experience of a Savio education due to financial constraints.

Today we ask you to join other supporters in empowering dreams and fostering the next generation of servant leaders. Your donation today will directly impact the lives of our students and uphold the values and commitment to excellence that define the Savio community.

In today's charitable giving space, there are so many options available for you to easily support the school. In addition to a one time or recurring cash gift, many of our supporters give stock, grants from their Donor Advised funds, or in the case of many grandparents who are 70 ½ or older, make a Qualified Charitable Distribution. I am happy to speak to or meet with anyone who would like to explore these "tax-smart" opportunities.

No matter how you give, together, we can uphold the promise of education and faith formation that St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School represents. Thank you for considering a gift that will echo through the lives of our students.



GINA KERLEY

MAKE A GIFT TODAY!

**Join us in mission to keep Catholic
education affordable and accessible
to all families who desire one.
Thank you for your support!**



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 12
Adoration at SVDP

APRIL 12
Parent Information
Session
8:30-10:00 a.m.

APRIL 13
Taste of Savio
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

APRIL 17
Junior Ring Blessing
at All-School Mass

APRIL 17
Parent Faith &
Fellowship Night
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

APRIL 18-20
Savio Spring Musical

APRIL 26
Imago Christi Day

APRIL 27
Prom

MAY 6-10
Teacher Appreciation
Week

MAY 8-17
AP Exams

MAY 17
Adoration at SVDP

MAY 20
Senior Salute

MAY 21-24
Semester Exams

MAY 24
Last Day of School

MAY 24
Savio Baccalaureate
Mass
5:00 p.m.

MAY 25
Graduation
Riverbend Center of
the Arts

Scan to see more events on
the school calendar:



Baccalaureate
Mass
5 p.m., May 24,
St. Vincent
De Paul Catholic
Church



Save the Date

St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School Graduation
10:00 a.m., May 25, 2023
Riverbend Centre for the Arts
4214 N. Capital of Texas Highway



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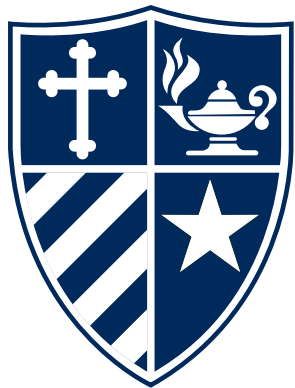


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1/4 page, 1/2 page and full page ads - limited space available in quarterly Savio Now! magazine

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NATIONAL MERIT ACCOLADES

Savio's 14 National Merit Scholars were recognized at a school Mass. From left to right, front row: Audrey Johnson, Nina Mazza, Esperanza Moreno, Sophia Gonzalez, Joselyn Tupa, Molly Brown, Grace Parker, Jackson Hope. Back row: Marissa Lopez, Thomas Edmonds, Noemi Carillo Barajas, Michael Synstegard, Serenity Chavez, Jonathan Saenz, Mr. Evan Psencik.