Mater Dei High School in the Diocese of Orange, mindful of its mission to be witness to the love of Christ for all, believes every person, as a child of God, regardless of race, condition, or age, has equal dignity and an inalienable right to an education. Therefore, no qualified student will be denied admission to this school on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin.
Fall semester is almost over. Semester finals will begin on Tuesday, January 26, 2010. You need to be spending time studying and preparing for our finals. First semester senior grades are very important to the colleges. Make sure you are obtaining the highest grades possible by doing your best in preparing for and in taking your finals.

Many of you have heard whether or not you have been admitted into a college/university for the Fall 2010. Congratulations to those who have gotten into the colleges they applied to. If you have already received notice of acceptance, please see your counselor and tell her the good news. We would love to celebrate your acceptance.

Some of you are still applying to those private colleges that have a later deadline date. Please remember to pay close attention to the deadline dates and get all your necessary paperwork to the colleges on time.

If you need Secondary School Reports and/or Letters of Recommendations written by either your counselor or teachers, you should be giving them the necessary paperwork immediately.

Now is the time to visit the colleges/universities you have applied to. Make sure you call ahead and request a tour and ask if it would be possible to speak to an Admissions Representative for a few minutes after your tour. When you call for the tour ask if a former Mater Dei student is available to guide you on your tour.

Remember if colleges/universities are recommending interviews.....DO IT!!! First impressions are lasting impressions. So dress appropriately and send a handwritten thank you card after the interview. Remember to research the school prior to the interview and have a couple of questions to ask the interviewer after he/she has finished interviewing you.

We will be offering a Financial Aid Night on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Le Vecke Center. A financial aid representative will be here to take parents line by line through the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The FAFSA is the application all colleges require in order to receive financial aid through the federal government, state government and institution. You won’t want to miss this evening. So mark your calendars. All parents of seniors should file the FAFSA by March 2, 2010.

Check out our College and Career Planning website for more specific “Things to do this month” for each grade level, and information on scholarships, financial aid, and other good college search websites. For additional info, please contact Ms. Castro in the College and Career Center at mcastro@materdei.org or (714) 850-9561.

PERFORMING ARTS UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 5-7.............Senior Musical auditions/ callbacks, 3:00 p.m., choir room
Jan. 8-10.............USA Regional Desert Oasis H.S., Las Vegas
Jan. 8-11.............Hand-bell Festival, Las Vegas
Jan. 13.............Performing Arts Mass - 7:45 a.m.
Jan. 16.............CETA Festival
Jan. 15-16...........Miss Dance and Drill Team at MAC
Jan. 16.............Cheer, USA Regional, RSM
Jan. 23.............Song: Spirit Spectacular
Jan. 23.............Aliso Dance Classic, Aliso H.S. (TBA)
Jan. 30-31...........Cheer Pros/Song State Comp Championship
                       Long Beach Pyramid

For more information on any of these events, please contact Mater Dei’s Performing Arts Department at (714) 957-3784.
Kalyn McCall, January Student of the Month, was named a scholar in the College Board’s National Achievement Scholarship Program. She excels in the classroom and carries a GPA of 4.571 having taken Honors Geometry, Honors English I, AP European History, Honors English II, Honors Spanish III, AP US History, AP Biology, AP Art History, AP Spanish IV Language, AP English IV, AP Spanish IV Literature, AP US Government and AP Physics.

Kalyn is an active member of ASB and serves as one of four Club Commissioners. Her commission oversees the regulation and creation of clubs through the Activities office and organizes the club fairs which take place during lunch each semester. Kalyn and her fellow club commissioners recently collaborated with the Website & Technology Commissioners to see that all clubs have a page on the website to promote their activities, events and meetings. Visit www.materdei.org/clubs to see learn more about the awesome club program at MD.

In working to fulfill her 80 hours of Christian service, Kalyn has volunteered her time each summer at the Fountain Valley Library Summer Reading Program. She has worked at the Discovery Science Center and at the Fountain Valley Library with their After School Homework Help Program. Kalyn also enjoys tutoring and says, “My favorite project has been tutoring kids one on one. Whether they are young or teenagers, it’s always rewarding to see them succeed, improve, and gain a bit of confidence in themselves.”

When asked about her favorite Mater Dei memory, Kalyn said “It’s impossible to choose just one. Each day I have been given the opportunity to spend time with friends, have fun and make countless memories. At the same time, I’ve had the chance to encounter teachers who have inspired and encouraged me, and to discover a bit more about myself and what I want to be.”

College is just a few short months away and Kalyn is considering Harvard, Columbia, Washington University in St. Louis, Spellman, Howard and Stanford. She is deciding between majors in African/African-American Studies, Pre-Law, Political Science, or Art History/Criticism.

When reflecting back on her overall experience as a Monarch, Kalyn says, “In my eyes, the Mater Dei experience has been the first of many steps I will take to make something of myself in the future. Looking back, I realize that it has prepared me for what’s next in my life, and that these last four years have meant a lot. It’s all good.”

Neal O’Hara, January Student of the Month, is grateful for the opportunity to attend Mater Dei. “Mater Dei not only lived up to the hype but exceeded my expectations. I found it to be melting pot of personalities, cultures and backgrounds with genuine school pride and widespread student involvement. That, to me, is a perfect recipe for a rewarding high school experience.” Neal was able to hit the ground running his freshman year because he had effectively shadowed a graduating older brother for four years. Neal spent four challenging years on the varsity water polo team and feels fortunate to have developed friendships with students all over the county.

In the classroom, Neal challenged himself with honors and AP courses. He maintains a GPA of 4.18 and credits his academic success to the dedicated and supportive teachers and administrators. “At Mater Dei, the teachers really care about their students. They want us to learn, not just earn a grade.” Neal is a member of the National Honor Society, a California Scholarship Federation Seal Bearer, an AP Scholar, a National Merit Commended Scholar and a US Water Polo Academic All American.

Mater Dei’s championship water polo program has been a big part of Neal’s Monarch experience. As a four year varsity player, he has been coached by one of the best water polo coaches in the nation, former Olympian and Mater Dei coach Chris Segesman. “I have a lot of respect for Coach Segesman. In addition to the game of water polo, he has taught me important life lessons like how to how to set goals and work hard. I was able to watch Coach Segesman develop a plan to build a first class water polo program, get the players, the parents and the administration to buy into the plan and then execute the plan to perfection.”

Community Service and outreach are at the heart of Mater Dei and like many MD students, Neal learned about the rewards that come with giving to others through volunteering. His favorite volunteer activities were the Mater Dei Special Games and coaching youth basketball for the Boys’ and Girls’ Club. Neal was also involved in the Orange County Constitutional Rights Foundation Peer Court, Lion’s Share and tutoring.

Winning back to back CIF Water Polo Championships are Neal’s favorite Mater Dei memories. “Both times our crowd was cheering so loud the water was vibrating. We always had great parent and fan support.”

As for life after Mater Dei, Neal has committed to attend Harvard University and play water polo. He is interested in science and politics.

Neal lives in Newport Beach with his parents John and Catherine and his sister, Regan (’13). His older brother Brendan graduated from MD in ’06. Neal went to elementary school and is a parishioner at Our Lady Queen of Angels in Newport.
Solar is so 2009.

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