



## A HEART FOR SERVICE



Senior Grace Wood has raised money to buy goats for women in rural Uganda to help them economically. Grace has visited Uganda twice on mission trips.

### JPII SENIOR HELPS POOR IN UGANDA

Pope John Paul II High School senior Grace Wood visited Uganda and found a new direction for her life.

"The first time I went over I was kind of into service but it wasn't a focus of my life," Grace said.

But on that trip during her junior year she saw first-hand the ravages of Uganda's AIDS epidemic, the orphans left

behind, the poverty, and the limited economic opportunities in a developing country. She had to answer the question, "Do I want to step outside my comfort zone to find out how God wants to use me?"

The answer came back clearly. "Now, I really want to make

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A KNIGHT'S TALE



JPII ALUMNI PAGE



ATHLETICS



SCHOOL



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Admissions Office  
615-822-2375  
[info@jp2hs.org](mailto:info@jp2hs.org)



## Fund For Excellence reaching for record goal

The goal for this year's Fund for Excellence campaign is to raise \$440,000 to help pay for the operation costs of the school beyond what is covered by tuition and fees.

The goal, which is the highest ever for JPII, includes proceeds not only from the annual giving campaign but also from the annual Gala to be held next February and the Hand In Hand program fundraising.

The chairs for the Fund For Excellence this year are Brandi and Chris Locke.

The annual Gala will be held on Feb. 7, 2015, at the Bluegrass Country Club in Hendersonville.

The school is looking for corporate sponsors and auction items, such as works of art, tickets to sporting events, or vacation trips.

For more information about sponsorships or donating auction items, contact the school at (615) 822-2375.

## VOLLEYBALL TEAM SETS RECORD FOR WINS

For the second year in a row, the Pope John Paul II High School volleyball team set a school record for wins in a season.

In 2013, the team set the school record with 22 wins. "This year we had 31," said Coach Kim Shaver. "That was really exciting for us to get to 31 wins."

Along the way, the team took first place in two tournaments. Last year, JPII lost in the championship match of the White County tournament. "We were determined to go back and win the whole thing," Coach Shaver said. And the Knights were dominant in the tournament, which kicked off the season. "We didn't even lose a game," Coach Shaver said.

JPII followed up that tournament with another stellar performance in the Bison Bash hosted by Station Camp High School. "We haven't gotten past the semifinals of the Gold Division" before this season, Coach Shaver said. But again JPII was dominant finishing the tournament with a 9-0 record without dropping a single game on the way to the tournament championship. JPII beat Beech High School in the championship match.

"We had never won a tournament before, so we were really excited," Coach Shaver said of the two first place finishes.

Next was the Mid-Tenn Classic, a large tournament where JPII made it to the semifinals of the Silver Division, beating Hutchison of Memphis along the way.

"I felt like a lot of our players had either been starters or

saw significant playing time in 2013. They had worked hard in the off season. We knew we would come back with more experience and confidence. It showed up on the court," Coach Shaver said. "They were really determined."

The team finished with a 31-18 record competing in the tough Division II-AA East/Middle Region, which produced both teams in the state championship match at the end of the season. "I felt like we competed really, really well within the region," Coach Shaver said.

Junior setter Savannah Brown led the team in assists, setting the school record with 789, and aces, setting another school record with 115. She was named the team's Co-MVP along with senior outside hitter Blythe Clausen, who led the team with 247 kills. Clausen made the switch from playing libero – a defensive specialist – as a junior to playing outside hitter as a senior. Even from the outside hitter position, Clausen was second on the team in digs and was voted the Hustle Award for the second year in a row. "She's a kid who won't let the ball hit the ground," Coach Shaver said.

Junior Katherine Bagwell and senior Megan Reding finished one-two on the team in blocks, and junior libero Macy Hanson led the team in digs with 414. Junior Windee Johnson was voted Most Improved.

The team also got contributions from seniors Briah Boyce and Rachel Richardson and juniors Madison Farris, Emily Galluzzi and Callie Ryan.

## CHORAL STUDENTS NAMED TO MID-STATE, ALL STATE CHOIRS

Ten students from Pope John Paul II High School have been named to the Mid-State and All-State Choirs and another student was named to the Freshman Honors Choir, all sponsored by the Tennessee Music Educators Association.

The students selected for the Mid-State Choir include: Gaby Aguilar, Anna Bass, Tally Bevis, Carlee Campbell, Skylar Carson-Reynolds, Chu Chu, Macey Crow, Hillary Edwards, Zach Janson and Michelle Moore. In addition, Anna Bass was chosen for the All-State Choir and ranked fourth Soprano 1 in the Middle Tennessee area, and Zach Janson was chosen for the All-State Choir and ranked 16th Bass 2. Gaby Aguilar, Hillary Edwards, Skylar Carson-Reynolds, Macey Crow and Chu Chu were named alternates for All State. Catherine Bender was named to the Freshman Honors Choir.

Seventeen JPII students in the school's choral program auditioned for the Mid-State and Freshman Honors Choirs. They were among 1,500 students from Middle Tennessee

schools auditioning. The Mid-State Concert was held Nov. 18 at Christ Church in Brentwood, and the All State Concert will be held April 11, 2015, at the end of the Tennessee Music Educators Association Convention in Memphis.



Eleven students at Pope John Paul II High School were named to the Tennessee Music Educators Association's All State, Mid-State and Freshman Honors Choir. They include: (front row, L-R) Catherine Bender, Skylar Carson-Reynolds, Chu Chu, Carlee Campbell, Macey Crow, Hilary Edwards, Anna Bass; (second row) JPII Choral Director Mike O'Neill, Michelle Moore, Gaby Aguilar, Tally Bevis and Zach Janson.

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service a focus of my life.”

During her junior year, Grace’s door to Uganda was opened by Dr. Mary Kay Koen, who has visited the country on several mission trips. Dr. Koen was going back to Uganda and was taking her son Michael, another JPII senior. She asked Grace and her mother, Jennifer Wood, if they wanted to go on the trip with them. Also on that trip was JPII senior Christian Cook, his mother, Shannon Cook, and Lauren Hutchison, a student at Hendersonville High School.

While on that first trip to Uganda, Grace and the group met Mama Phoebe Sosi. When the AIDS epidemic hit Uganda, many of Mama Phoebe’s dying friends asked her to take care of their children. “There was so much death around her,” Grace said. She ended up caring for so many AIDS orphans, Mama Phoebe eventually opened an orphanage in an area known as Ground Zero for the country’s epidemic, Grace said.

While at the orphanage, Grace said, “we were just trying to build relationships with the kids and let them know we care and love them.”

During a church service, a little girl named Juliette caught Grace’s eye and they smiled at each other. “I felt like I should help her, but didn’t know how or even if she needed help,” Grace said.

She saw Juliette again the next day and found out her family had been devastated by AIDS and she needed surgery for an umbilical hernia protruding from her stomach.

Grace’s interest and help wasn’t limited to Juliette. “Going to a foreign country and doing a mission project was frightening,” Grace said. “I didn’t know how I was going to help people.”

She found her answer in a goat. Grace raised \$700 money for a program that provides women two goats. “A goat in the United States doesn’t mean much,” Grace said, but in rural areas of Uganda, a goat is a source of milk and their offspring are a source of meat. And when the women raise a herd of goats, they can trade it for a cow, which is worth even more, Grace explained.

Wood returned home with a new attachment to Uganda and its people. When she learned that Dr. Koen was going back to Uganda last summer, Grace started making plans to go with her. “Uganda touched my heart, and I wanted to go back,” Grace said.

Before the trip, Grace raised another \$1,800 for the goat project. “People here are so willing to serve and willing to help. I didn’t have to ask for money. People would hear what I was doing and offer to donate. ... Raising the money wasn’t as hard as it might sound. I really believe it was God’s will.”

The goat project has changed and grown, Grace said. The women who receive the goats sign a contract promising they will take of the goats and will meet with the other recipients regularly, where the group can learn other skills. The women also agree to donate one of the offspring of their goats to another woman in the community, Grace said. “Mama Phoebe said she thinks it will be self-sustaining in the next five years.”



Grace Wood is surrounded by children during a visit to Uganda last summer.

On the second trip, Grace also was able to check on Juliette, who is now living at a boarding school established by Mama Phoebe.

“She’s kind of a celebrity in her town because of her surgery and her sponsorship,” Grace said of Juliette. “Other kids follow her to church” because they realize she found help and hope there, Wood said.

Grace has been inspired by her visits to Uganda. She is considering taking a gap year after graduating from JPII to serve in a third-world country before starting college. “I definitely want to take time to do service,” she said.

And Uganda remains close to her heart. “In Uganda, they are most loving people I’ve ever met,” Grace said. While walking to church one day in Uganda, “I had a swarm of kids on me,” Grace said. One little girl fought her way through the crowd and slipped a bunch of beads and necklaces into Grace’s hand. “It was the most loving act I’ve ever experienced,” Grace said. “She didn’t expect anything in return. It was her only possession.”

Grace wanted to return the kindness but the only thing she had was an unopened Chapstick. The girl’s response was a huge smile. “It was the best moment. ... I still have the bracelet and necklace in my room to remind me of the power of love.”

## JPII GRAD TAKES STEP TOWARD PRIESTHOOD

Andy Bulso, a member of Pope John Paul II High School's first graduating class in 2005 and a seminarian for the Diocese of Nashville, took a major step toward his ordination as a priest when he was among 43 seminarians from the Pontifical North American College in Rome to be ordained as a transitional deacon.

Deacon Bulso's parents, Bishop David Choby and several others from the Diocese of Nashville were in Rome on Oct. 2 when he was ordained to the transitional diaconate by Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, D.C. Deacon Bulso is scheduled to be ordained as a priest in the summer of 2015, which would make him the first JPII alum to enter the priesthood.

He was a freshman at Montgomery Bell Academy as JPII prepared to open. He and his father took a tour of the still unfinished school with founding headmaster Hans Broekman. "It just seemed like a once in a lifetime opportunity," to go to a new Catholic school with top-of-the-line academics and be in the first graduating class, Deacon Bulso told *Beyond Ourselves*, JPII's alumni magazine.

"As I reflect back I really appreciate the quality of education I got," he said. "I had good reasons to switch to JPII, but it really worked out better than I could have ever imagined."

He still appreciates the education he received as a student of some of the school's top teachers, Betty Mayberry, Jennifer Dye, Richard Stephenson and Karen Phillips. But it was more than the classroom experience that made his high school years fruitful, Bulso said. "One of the great things about JPII was the amount of opportunities I had." He was one of the first members of the school's honor society Societas, participated in Model UN and Mock Trial and was on the tennis team.

After graduating from JPII, Bulso became the school's first graduate to attend the University of Notre Dame, where he earned a degree in liberal arts, which is a mixture of philosophy and literature, in 2009. The following fall, he enrolled as a seminarian at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, where he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy two years later. Deacon Bulso then moved to Rome to complete his studies as a seminarian. In the spring of 2014, he earned a baccalaureate in sacred theology and is currently working on an advanced degree in Scripture studies.

Congratulations to Deacon Bulso!

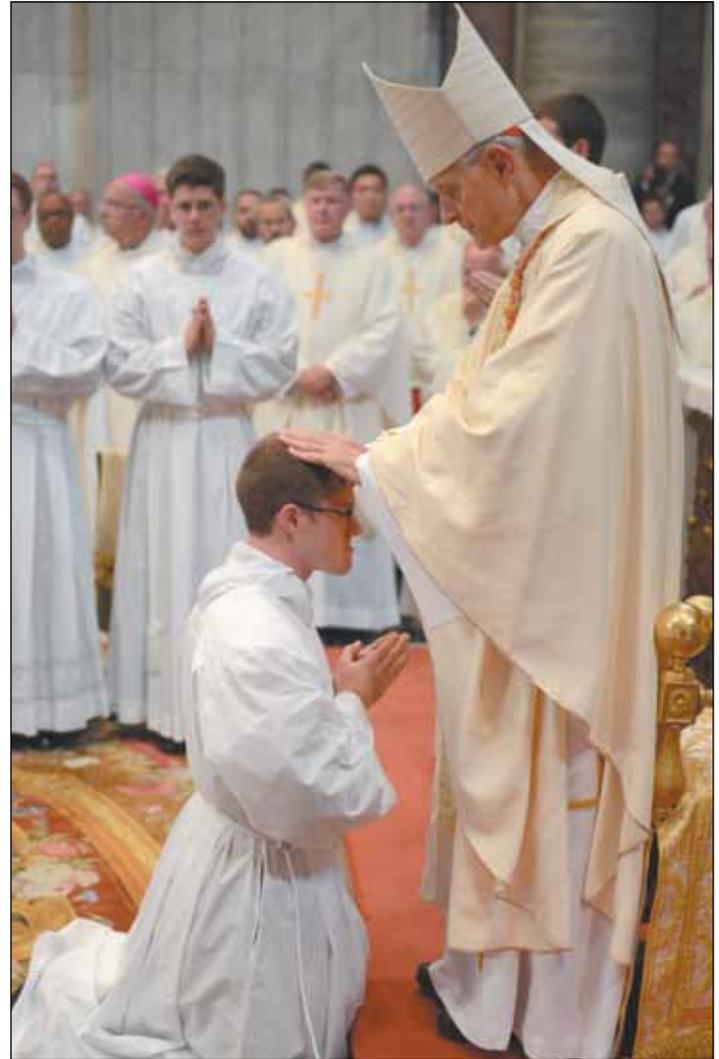


Photo by Michael Lund, PNAC Photo Service

Andy Bulso, a 2005 graduate of JPII, was ordained a transitional deacon in Rome by Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., Deacon Bulso, a seminarian for the Diocese of Nashville is scheduled to be ordained a priest next summer.

## JPII HOSTS METRO MATH LEAGUE COMPETITION

JPII hosted the Metro Math League mathematics competition on Thursday, Oct. 30. More than 300 young mathematicians arrived on campus at JPII to show their mathematical ability as part of a Metro Math League competition on Thursday, Oct. 30.

Schools competing included: University School, Ensworth, Montgomery Bell Academy, Hume Fogg, almost all the Williamson County Schools and even some schools from Murfreesboro.

The JPII teams were successful as teams and as individuals, competing

against some of the best teams in the state:

- Geometry: second place team; Justin Humphries, second place individual.
- Algebra 2: second place team; Haoming Ning, first place individual.
- Calculus: second place team; Daniel Edwards, second place individual only one point behind the first place finisher.
- Statistics: second place team; Chu Chu, third place individual.

## ANNUAL COLLOQUIUM EXAMINES ROLE OF ART IN CHRISTIANITY

Throughout the ages, Christian art has presented Christ in a variety of ways: a powerful creator of the world and as an infant; as a miracle worker and suffering and dying on the cross; sitting as a judge and kneeling in prayer.

“How do you portray Christ in his totality? You can portray aspects of Christ. It may not be possible to portray the totality of Christ, but that’s the challenge of artists,” said Dr. Lee Jefferson, Ph.D., one of two speakers at a colloquium titled “The Search for New ‘Epiphanies’ of Beauty: Art in the Catholic Tradition,” sponsored by Pope John Paul II High School on Tuesday, Oct. 21.



Dr. Timothy P. O'Malley, Ph.D., photo at left, director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy and a speaker at Pope John Paul II High School's annual colloquium, speaks with senior Jacob Telli after his talk. Dr. Lee Jefferson, Ph.D., photo at right, an assistant professor of religion at Centre College and the other speaker at the colloquium, speaks with senior Hunter Apple.



## JPII STUDENTS PREPARING FOR FRENCH EXCHANGE TRIP

Twelve JPII students will be sharpening their skills in speaking French and getting a first-hand look at French culture when they participate next summer in the school's French exchange program.

The two-week stay in France May 25 to June 8 will be the second exchange JPII has participated in with Saint Riquier, a Catholic school in Amiens, France. Twelve students from Saint Riquier will visit JPII April 27 to May 8. They will stay with the families of the 12 JPII students going to France and then host their JPII counterpart, explained Melanie Taylor, JPII's French teacher and the organizer of the exchange program.

While in France, the JPII students will be able to practice their language skills in an immersion situation. They also will visit cultural landmarks in northern France around Amiens and Paris. On the anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Normandy in World War II, the JPII delegation will travel to Normandy to visit the landing site at Omaha Beach and Omaha Beach and the American cemetery, Ms. Taylor said.

The students will attend Mass in France and worship in French, Ms. Taylor

said. With tourism, faith and cultural immersion, “It’s the whole package,” Ms. Taylor said of the exchange program.

The program, held every other year, is geared for students between their junior and senior years, Ms. Taylor said. It is open to students who have had at least two years of French, and preferably those who have completed JPII's requirement of three years of a foreign language, she said. The goal is that the exchange program will encourage students to take a fourth year of French.

The program is closed for this school year, but freshmen and sophomores can start looking ahead to the next one in the spring and summer of 2017, Ms. Taylor said.

The JPII students will be traveling to France are: Julie Underhill, Kathleen White, Kiera Reeves, Matt Craven, Carter O'Connell, Ian Atkins, Jordan Wirth, Jack Palen, Abby Mysinger, Sarah Gould, Christina Celia and Nisha Montiero. Ms. Taylor and an additional JPII faculty member will accompany the students to France.

## MS. STROBEL IS 'SO GLAD TO BE HERE'

After graduating from college, Pamela Strobel wasn't sure what she wanted to do with her life. But after working in youth ministry for three years, she found her vocation. "I wanted to work with teens, I wanted to teach them, I wanted to teach them English, and I wanted to work at a Catholic high school," said Ms. Strobel who joined the JP II faculty this year as an English teacher.

A native of Nashville, Ms. Strobel graduated from St. Pius School and Hume-Fogg Academic Magnet School. Next, she earned a bachelor's degree in English literature with a minor in sacred theology from a new Catholic college, Southern Catholic College in Dawsonville, Ga.

After graduating in 2009, she went to work for National Evangelization Teams USA – NET Ministries as one of 120 young Catholic adults giving nine months of their lives serving the youth of the Church. In the first year, she worked with teens in parish ministry in Hastings, Minn. The second year, she was a co-leader of a team that traveled the country putting on retreats. When that year was over, she returned to Minnesota to work as a youth minister for a five-parish region.

"I realized that teenagers responded to me. That I could relate to them," Ms. Strobel said. "Because I was able to recognize that gift that I can speak to teenagers, I have a passion to show them the language that I love so much."



Pamela Strobel

So Ms. Strobel returned to Nashville to start work on a master's degree in teaching at Aquinas College. As part of that program, Ms. Strobel was required to teach a class at a school, so she e-mailed JP II English Department Chair Jennifer Smith to see if she could meet that requirement at JP II. Ms. Smith had her teach a unit on Southern Gothic literature.

When there was an opening in the English Department for this year, Ms. Smith asked Ms. Strobel if she was interested in interviewing for it. She already was familiar with JP II because all three of her younger siblings are alums: Robert in 2007, Martin in 2010, and Hannah in 2012. "It gave so much to my family. It gave so much to my siblings. Their best friends now are people they met at JP II," Ms. Strobel said. "I knew I wanted to be part of it."

Ms. Strobel teaches Standard English for sophomores, Advanced English for juniors and Language and Learning Foundations for freshmen.

She has been surprised to find "how much, I don't think they realize it, but how much the students expect from their teacher. They expect a lot from their teachers, as much as we expect from them. It's been a pleasant surprise. It holds me accountable."

Ms. Strobel also has been impressed by her colleagues on the faculty. "The English Department has been so nice, so wonderful," offering advice, she said. "It's encouraged and expected that you share ideas so the whole department is as good as it can be. Jennifer Smith recognizes our gifts and talents and uses us for what our gifts and talents are."

"I love it," Ms. Strobel said of JP II. "I'm so glad to be here."

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