

Winter / Spring 2024 | Issue 5

The OSL Observer

The Newsletter of Our Saviour Lutheran School

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Spring has Sprung



Spring is a time of renewal and reflection for many. At OSL, Springtime is marked by warmer weather, sunny days, new lessons, and old experiences in a new place.

Image: ELA students enjoying outdoor reading with Mr. Bénitez.

We are excited for all of our students, with special attention to our seniors students and senior families who are preparing for prom and graduation.

Our faculty and staff continue to provide opportunities to learn and engage with materials both inside and outside of the classroom. Our students work to complete assignments, grow further in their experiences, and learn more about what it means to be a person of impact. Through their classes, pathways, programs, extra-curricular activities, and all of the offerings here at Our Saviour, this Spring will be a wonderful time for our entire school community!

Developing Student-Athletes



The OSL Lady Falcons had an incredible Fall season, reaching the league finals before earning 2nd Place in the CSAA. Of course, this simply prepared them for an even greater Spring season! The Lady Falcons will begin their Spring journey under a new coaching staff. They will carry the lessons learned from the Fall season into their journey for the number 1 spot to finish strong. Each team member brings a different element to the team and the game. The ladies are excited to grow as individuals, and as a team. *Be sure to join us at home games with our "OSL BELLS."*

FUN FACT: The Lady Falcons were honored at OSL this spring for having **the highest TEAM-WIDE GPA**. Our girls have beauty, brains, and the boldness required to excel at any level. This will be an exciting season to watch.



Developing Student-Athletes

The OSL Falcons

Basketball seasons for this year have come to a close, with many great successes achieved:



++ OSL 8th Grade: Through dominant performances, our 8th Grade Falcons, which features some of the top 8th Grade student-athletes in the nation, had two amazing seasons, both culminating in championships in the CSAA League.

++ OSL Varsity: With significant growth throughout the season, our Varsity Falcons developed into a strong, competitive team. With no senior student-athletes, they look forward to returning for another run at a CSAA League title next year.

++ OSL Regional: With the best record for a Regional Falcons team in school history (23-7), the team advanced to the Power 5 AA Conference Semi-Finals, suffering a close defeat to the eventual league champion. **With a number of seniors preparing for the opportunity to play basketball at the college level, we look forward to announcing some athletic scholarships for some incredible young men.**

++ OSL Prep: As always, the Prep Falcons had a stellar season, winning the Great Atlantic Conference Championship and finishing in the Final Four of the Power 5 AAA Conference. With two Power 5 AAA All-Conference selections – **Naceiar Kirksey & Ziyade N'Dancky** - the team continued our great tradition of strength and development. We look forward to all of their college announcements, coming throughout the Spring.

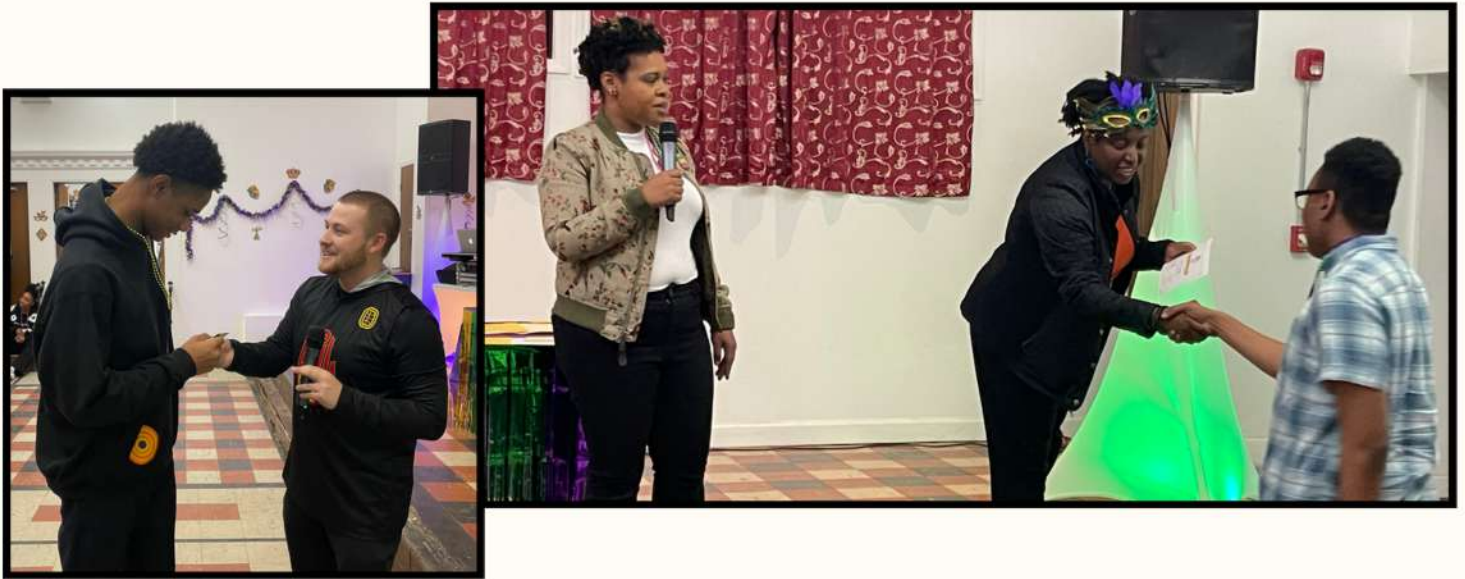
++ OSL National: The National Falcons, also known as **JellyFam**, finished a thrilling season with a difficult 2-1 series loss in the Overtime Elite (OTE) League quarterfinals. OTE is the most difficult league in high school basketball and all 5 senior student-athletes on the team will be heading to college with full athletic scholarships! ***If you want to learn more about the team, watch our team docuseries, found on the "Overtime" YouTube channel.***

Academics in Action

Celebration Circle for Honors Students

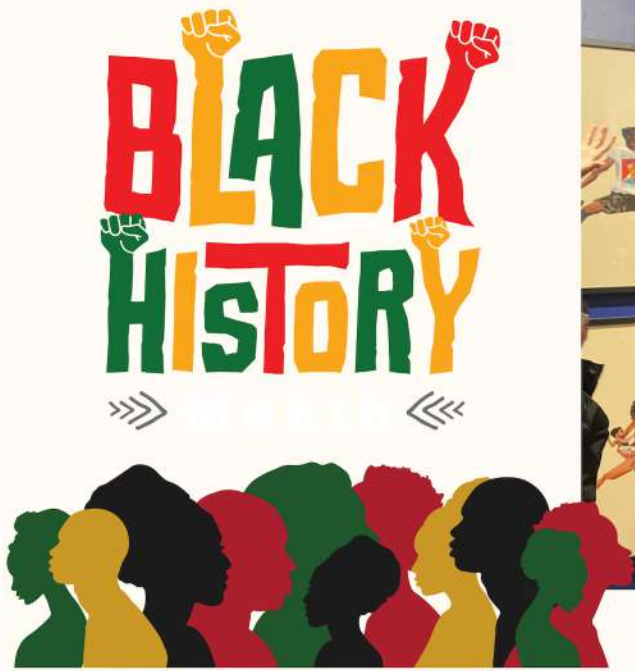
Several times throughout the year we honor our students for a job well done in the classroom. This year, we did it "celebration circle" style with honoring our scholar-athletes (those who play a sport and have an 90+) and our honor roll and high honor roll.

Celebrating our students is integral to their emotional and social well-being. Earning and maintaining honor roll status provides students with special privileges, such as dress down Fridays, and it sets them for their next course of action post graduation.



We are excited and proud of our seniors this year who have already received acceptances to the following colleges and post-secondary programs: **University of Buffalo, University of Connecticut, Lincoln Technical School, Virginia State University, University of North Carolina, Syracuse University, Morgan State, and SUNY Albany** to name a few! Keep our graduating seniors in your thoughts and prayers as they continue to move forward in faith pursuing their dreams.

Celebrating Black History Month



At OSL we focus on hands-on learning experiences that are culturally relevant and expansive. Our educators regularly take trips and this February was no exception. All 8th graders take a Black History Course as part of their learning at OSL. Ms. Ford helped to design this course as preparation for history study in high school.

Experiential learning that is connected to the classroom is a huge part of the student experience. This course in particular provides a wonderful opportunity to broaden the understanding of the rich culture and history of Black Americans. This history of the film, sports and music industry for Black Americans was shaped in huge part by Spike Lee. OSL 8th, 9th and 10th graders visited the Brooklyn Museum for the exclusive visit of his collection of sports, art, music and film memorabilia. We are thankful for the opportunity to see our city in different ways. As Mr. Spike Lee would say, "Go New York, Go New York, GO!"

Celebrating Black History Month



Dr. Janine Bolling **Why Black History Month** **is Important**

I grew up in Brooklyn learning from my educators that Black History is something that we can make every day. I am a graduate of P.S. 183 in Brownsville then went on to attend Roy H. Mann in Bensonhurst and St. John's Ev. Lutheran in Williamsburg.

I graduated high school from Martin Luther in Queens. Although I had the privilege of growing up around many Black teachers, but I didn't have any Black school leaders after leaving elementary school. I wanted to be that for someone else. Black History is about overcoming what is around you to use what God put within you. I see Black History in all of my students and in myself. It transcends race and embraces our shared story for me.

There is no reason that the sacrifices and gifts of our ancestors go to waste. Many of us share ancestors that we don't know or realize. It really is "bigger than Black and White". We are the heirs of their gifts, and that is what drives the continued push forward for our people. God created each of us on purpose and we get to honor that daily.

Celebrating Black History Month

This month I have been excited to share with students the impacts from the past, and the reality that ALL of us impact Black History. *In a world filled with choices, we are connected through creativity to our Creator (John 15:1-5).* Our school teaches the same. Here, we learn from our talented educational team inside the classroom. We also learn from educators outside the classroom. This includes admin, pastors, coaches, parents, grandparents, volunteers and school staff.

It brings me joy to be at a Lutheran school like OSL where we have Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino, Indo-Caribbean and African brothers and sisters together alongside the rest of our diverse student body. I am excited to see what they know and what they will learn and tell. Black History Month is important because it brings light to truth that everyone has not seen yet. I love being able to share it with my OSL kids.

-Dcs. Dr. Janine Bolling
Executive Director of School,
Our Saviour Lutheran School

"I know that when I decided I wanted to be a filmmaker, I wanted to capture the richness of African American culture that I can see, just standing on the corner or looking out my window every day, and get that on screen."



Pathways



Getting creative at MADE Art Studio

The Pathways Program offers several opportunities for our students to engage with professionals in the arts, athletics, business, health sciences, and ministry. The pathways program at Our Savior Lutheran School, aims to help Student-Athletes, Student-Artists, and Student-Entrepreneurs learn how to cast and pursue goals in alignment with their God-given gifts and talents.

YOU choose your path in life! It starts now. Students have enjoyed several trips as part of their experiential learning opportunities under the direction of Dr. Patrice Sullivan. Trips for spring have included: The Van Cortlandt Park Museum, The Jackie Robinson Museum, Bronx Music and Heritage Center, MADE Art Studio, and the Westchester Barber Academy.



Westchester Barber Academy

Pathways



Dr. Sullivan works 1:1 with a student in a dual enrollment entrepreneurship course.



Jiro, OS� student-artist leads his team in painting a new lobby mural.



Students with an athletic focus practice their volleyball moves.

Ash Wednesday

Our OSL Community (Students, Faculty, Staff, & Congregation) joined together for Ash Wednesday Worship. **Ash Wednesday begins the church's annual season of focus on repentance, traditionally marked by fasting, sacrificial giving, and prayer.** As the name suggests, many churches practice the ceremony of the imposition of ashes on this day. Ashes are a symbol of mortality and repentance, since "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).



We ourselves will not overcome the temptations of Satan, our sinful flesh, or death, but **Jesus – our true champion – has overcome and gives us true victory.** Throughout the season of Lent, we will watch as Christ endures and overcomes the devil, suffers willingly for our sakes, and redeems us by His blood and Passion. Our faith, gifted and worked by the Holy Spirit, trusts in our Lord and believes, even from the ash heap,

that **"a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise"** (Psalm 51:17). It is a great joy for us to worship together as a school community, another gift of our life at OSL.



Alumni Feature



Ansley Almonor ('21)



Ansley Almonor ('21) is currently a student-athlete at Fairleigh Dickinson University, **where he has established a remarkable time as a member of the FDU Knights Men's Basketball Team.**

This year, he achieved status as a First-Team All-NorthEast Conference (NEC) Player, which is a fantastic honor. The NorthEast Conference of the NCAA is one of the many Division I conferences. As the Northeast Conference (NEC) enters its 43rd year as an NCAA Division I athletic entity, **the league's NEC mission has remained remarkably consistent: to provide opportunities for student-athletes to achieve their fullest potential in the classroom, in athletic competition and in the community.** We continue to celebrate Ansley's achievements, as well as the incredible lives of all of our alumni!

If you'd like to be featured, please contact us at info@oursaviourbronx.org.

What's Next

Service Hours Opportunities



In the month of April, our students will have opportunities to serve at our supporting congregations, **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church & Our Saviour Lutheran Church**. Whether they are doing acts of service like assisting with the beautification of the property or they are serving in our worship service, the students have great opportunities to give their time and talents in our communities of faith.

Holy Week at Our Saviour and Trinity

This week, we celebrate Holy Week, which is the week in which Christians remember the saving work of Jesus. **Holy Week is commemorated through the observances of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, The Vigil of Easter, and the Celebration of Easter!**



If you'd like to join our supporting congregations for worship, please reach out to **Pastor Gonzalez** before March 28 via email: mgonzalez@oursaviourbronx.org.