



# ROUNDTABLE

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR AND FROM KNIGHTS

## New School Year Starts with Enrollment Boost



*Clockwise from top left: The newest members of the Mount Carmel School, K-5 Sister Remedios students, with their teacher aide, 2015 AlumKnight, Luisa Camacho (far left). Bishop Elect Ryan P. Jimenez encourages students to study hard during his homily at the opening mass, the Mass of the Holy Spirit. 4th grade student, Claire Kautz, listens attentively to her teacher explain classroom procedures.*

Marking a fifth year in a row of enrollment increases, Mount Carmel School opened doors for the new 2016-2017 school year with an enrollment of over 500 students, up from a historic low of 260 five years ago. In addition to the enrollment increase, the school launched the new year with many enhancements, including new kindergarten students from the Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center, a new ballet studio from Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts, an expanded playground, a new uniform code, much needed building and classroom repairs, and a new paint job on the middle school and elementary school buildings.

"It's almost as if students are walking on to a brand new campus," said school president, Galvin Deleon Guerrero. Deleon Guerrero took the helm of his alma mater five years ago when he returned as its president. "We owe a debt of gratitude to our hardworking administrators, our insurance company, our bank, and our insurance adjuster, all of whom worked tirelessly to prepare the campus for the new year."

Deleon Guerrero was referring to an insurance claim that was filed a year ago in the wake of Typhoon Soudelor. The school worked with Pacifica Insurance, Bank of Guam, and Smith Orloff and Associates to process a claim that was adequate to cover all needed repairs. The claim took a year to finalize, but it was just in time for all the repairs to be completed while students were away during the summer break. The claim covered repair of the middle school building roof, replacement of many air conditioners damaged in Soudelor, and a new paint job for two thirds of the campus facilities.

Deleon Guerrero lauded those who contributed to the effort. "We could not have done it without the help of Pacifica, Bank of Guam, Smith Orloff, and our school leaders, specifically Principal Frances Taimanao, Acting Business Manager Bobby Baldazo, and Director of Institutional Development John Blanco, who sacrificed their vacation time to ensure the campus was ready for the new year."

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Mount Carmel School

## Kids Drama Camp Concludes with Sold Out Film Festival



The Kids Drama Camp run by Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club concluded last week with a sold-out screening of a Star Wars Kids Fanfilm Festival at Hollywood Theaters. The festival featured three films that were shot and produced by kids in the camp: a mini-documentary "Star Wars: New Fans Awaken", a Lego stop-animation film "Race to the Finish Line", and a feature narrative "Star Wars: The Dream Awakens".

The three films showcased the acting and filming talent of kids in the camp and incorporated lessons that they had learned throughout the camp. Since the camp started back in June, kids learned about the various aspects of theater and filmmaking, including storyboarding, cinematography, and editing. Students were also treated to a week-long presentation on the Star Wars film franchise, and they watched Star Wars films and TV shows throughout the summer.

Kids in the camp were also guided and mentored by camp counselors drawn from the school's Theatre Club. Since its inception in 1996, the Theatre Club has produced 40 productions, including numerous films, which helped camp counselors and their campers with the filmmaking process.

For these counselors, helping the kids learn and grow was extremely rewarding.

As camp leader Kristle Richardson put it, "As an aspiring filmmaker, I wish I had attended this camp as a kid." She added, "This drama camp gave kids the opportunity to gain knowledge and hands-on experience with theater and film, as well as being exposed to movie classics, specifically, Star Wars."

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Home of the Knights

## Announcements

### Uniform Update

- Due to shipping issues with our vendor, many MCS polo shirts are not available at this time. We will thus accommodate students who do not have uniform shirts until they become available.
- The following types of sweaters, jackets, or other clothing items may be worn over student uniform: college-affiliated attire, solid colored sweaters or jackets (no prints), or MCS affiliated sweaters or jackets.
- Students may wear any color of shoes, however, shoe designs must not contradict the school's mission and philosophy. Specifically students may not wear shoes that promote violence, bullying, racism, sexism, alcoholic beverages, or illicit drugs. Also, please note that zories, slippers, or open-toed sandals, are not permitted.

### Traffic & Parking

- To help make morning drop-off and after-school pick-up traffic less congested, we have relocated all employee and student parking to the area just south of the gymnasium.
- Student drivers must register with the main office by providing a valid driver's license and a copy of vehicle registration.
- Please note that the entrance for Building C (north of the Cathedral) and the driveway for the Maturana Building (high school building) are designated as drop-off and pick-up areas.
- **DRIVERS MAY NOT PARK IN THE DRIVEWAYS AND LEAVE THEIR VEHICLES AT ANY TIME.**

## In the Future

### Parent Orientation/Open House

Wednesday, August 10  
5:00–7:00 pm

### Student Activities Fair

Wednesday, August 17  
Activity Period

### Student Leadership Retreat

Saturday, August 27

## ESLR of the Week

#1: Communicate effectively using various methods and mediums.

## Drama Camp

*continued from front*



*Drama Campers and Camp Counselors gather for a group photo in front of a banner made especially for the Star Wars Kids Film Festival.*

Fellow camp counselor and Star Wars aficionado, Justin Ocampo, felt the same. "I think the best part of it being a Star Wars camp was seeing the kids grow an interest in Star Wars in the same way I did around their age, and find their own certain personal connection to the characters. Whether it was Darth Vader or Princess Leia, everyone saw themselves or found their struggles relatable, and I thought that was amazing."

Another camp counselor, Zeno Deleon Guerrero, echoed Ocampo's sentiments. "One of the best parts about Drama Camp is seeing how these kids grow throughout the whole program. From the first day with most of them being shy and closed off to the last few days of almost uncontrollable energy. It was also heartwarming and heartbreaking to see a lot of them cry on that last day because some of us might not see each other again."

In the end, though, the counselors also learned much from their kids. According to Richardson, "As much as the camp had a lot to offer, the kids were the ones that taught me so much about myself, what to expect in the future, and not only emphasized the meaning of passion, but showing me what it takes to have it. They're such great people to have around, who were always looking forward to learning something new. It made me happy to watch their creativity bloom, humor show, and efforts matter to them."

The Kids Drama Camp and the Star Wars Kids Film Festival were made possible by a grant from the the CNMI Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA) Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program.

## Enrollment Boost

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### GOOD TEACHING = ENROLLMENT INCREASE

Regarding the enrollment increase, Principal Taimanao attributed it to the concerted efforts of faculty to improve instructional quality. She said, "Our accreditation evaluation and several surveys suggested that we take steps to improve how we teach, which is exactly what we did." She added, "As a result, we saw both an increase in student and parent satisfaction on recent surveys and an increase in student performance on standardized tests."

For Student Council president, Zeno Deleon Guerrero, the enrollment increase and all the new developments at the school are contributing to a high level of school spirit among the student body. As he put it, "Everyone still has their jitters, but they're really excited about meeting their old friends and making new ones. They're looking forward to everything that this new year has to offer."

### STUDENTS' MAIN DUTY: STUDY

The first day of school started with the annual opening day mass, the Mass of the Holy Spirit, which was celebrated by Father Ryan Jimenez, Bishop Elect for the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa. Despite his busy schedule preparing for his upcoming Episcopal Ordination on August 14th, Bishop Jimenez felt it was important to make time to help launch the school year.

After proclaiming the Gospel, Bishop Elect Jimenez led school employees in the Commissioning Ceremony of Catholic Educators, which is held every start of the school year during the Mass of the Holy Spirit. The ceremony highlighted the commitment of faculty, staff, and administrators to the school's mission and philosophy.

Soon after the Commissioning Ceremony, Bishop Elect Jimenez delivered his homily, in which he commended the school for its enrollment increase, observing, "It's been a while that we've seen the Cathedral almost this full." He also reminded students about their primary duty as students. "In all that you do, remember that as students, your focus is to study. So study hard and do your best."

While there has been a substantial enrollment increase, the school still has limited slots available in a few grade levels. For more information, call 234-6184 or visit [mountcarmelsaipan.com](http://mountcarmelsaipan.com).