



VILLA DUCHESNE
St. Louis, Missouri

HEAD OF SCHOOL
Start Date: Summer 2023
villa1929.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES



School of the Sacred Heart

Mission

Inspired by the vision of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Villa Duchesne strives to educate the heart and mind of each child in a nurturing and challenging environment. We are dedicated to educating the whole child and preparing our students for lives of faith in God, integrity, leadership, and service to others. Our mission is to transform the world, one child at a time.

OVERVIEW

Villa Duchesne provides a Catholic education in the Sacred Heart tradition for young women grades 7-12 and boys and girls ages 3 to grade 6. Inspired by the vision of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Villa Duchesne strives to educate the heart and mind of each child in a nurturing and challenging environment.

Villa Duchesne is seeking an innovative, experienced, and inspiring leader as its next Head of School.

THE SCHOOL

Villa Duchesne has been empowering minds and transforming hearts for more than 90 years in St. Louis. This starts with the Sacred Heart mission - to transform the world, one child at a time. Through strong academics, an abundance of student-led clubs, show choir, athletic teams, a wonderful theater program, outdoor education, faith and service, and a broad fine arts program, Villa gives every student a chance to ignite their passion and purpose.

The school boasts a co-educational early childhood and lower school and a single-gender upper school educating young women. As a Sacred Heart network school, they are linked to an international network of schools that all share the same mission and values. Villa Duchesne is poised for continued growth and advancement, with a goal to be the premier independent Catholic school in St. Louis and to support the success of students while fostering and inspiring spiritual, academic, social, and emotional growth.

At a Glance

Founded: 1929

Total students: 461

Students of color: 19%

Non-Catholic Students: 30%

Total faculty: 90

Faculty of color: 3%

Faculty with advanced degrees: 80%

Student/teacher ratio: 7:1

Financial aid budget: \$2.3 million

Students receiving aid: 30%

Endowment: \$19 million



Villa Duchesne students from approximately 70 feeder schools and 54 zip codes. The school sits on a 60+ acre campus and has been named one of America's most beautiful private high schools by [Architectural Digest](#).

Memberships and accreditations include Independent Schools of St. Louis, Independent Schools Association of the Central States, National Association of Independent Schools, Network of Sacred Heart Schools, National Coalition of Girls' Schools, Gurian Institute, and National Catholic Educational Association.

ACADEMICS

Villa Duchesne's curriculum is strong and competitive with the best independent schools in the region. Curricular advancement and alignment have been areas of focus for lower division and upper division principals, Dr. Peter Schroeder and Mrs. Jeannie Steenberge as they seek to challenge students and ready them for success at every level.

The [Goals and Criteria](#) of Sacred Heart education are the bedrock for learning at Villa Duchesne. These five goals, by which all Sacred Heart schools in North America are governed, are to commit to educate to: a personal and active faith in God, a deep respect for intellectual values, social awareness which impels to action, building of community as a Christian value, and personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.



Lower School

Villa Duchesne was established with the firm belief that each child is an incredible gift from God. Throughout classrooms, faculty and staff echo the sentiment of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, “For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society [of the Sacred Heart].” It is a sentiment shared by the 147 sister schools around the world as members of the [International Network of Sacred Heart Schools](#).

Over the last three years, the lower school has adopted Singapore Math, Fountas and Pinnell, a new social studies curriculum, the “Being a Writer” program, and STEMscopes science curriculum. A faculty committee is evaluating writing curricula to ensure lower school students have a depth of writing skill when they enter grade 7. Students are exposed to French, Spanish, and Latin, fine arts, and music. With great programming and thought-provoking lessons, students are supported throughout their journey of self-discovery and self-transformation.

Middle School

With a Sacred Heart perspective, Villa Duchesne Middle School guides young women through these formative years with multi-faceted and developmentally responsive programs and activities designed to meet the unique needs of early adolescents. A distinct middle school environment with a middle school Dean for 7th and 8th grade at the helm offers support for personal growth as well as appropriate rigor in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The Middle School curriculum provides a rigorous education in core classes including English, mathematics, science, social studies, theology, and physical education, as well as electives in fine arts, performing arts, and technology. Students leave middle school prepared for the challenges of high school.



High School

High School offers a comprehensive college preparatory program with a broad liberal arts emphasis for young women in grades 9-12. Villa has a block schedule with four 70 minute class periods per day and an academic lab period for meeting with faculty or completing a lab, or doing homework. A signature program in the high school is the writing conferencing program, where English faculty meet individually with their students to regularly review and provide feedback on writing.

Villa Duchesne offers 29 honors, advanced, and AP courses at the high school level, and many students participate in the 1818 credit program, receiving college credit in certain courses. The Center for Student Success provides support and intervention for students with learning differences and helps with building study habits and executive functioning.

Virtually all of its graduates go on to four-year colleges and universities, many with valuable merit scholarship opportunities.

College Acceptances

Students from the Class of 2022 received acceptances to the following institutions, among others:

- Agnes Scott College
- University of Arizona
- Auburn University
- Baylor University
- Bellarmine University
- Clemson University
- Columbia College Chicago
- Creighton University
- University of Dayton
- DePaul University
- Drake University
- Emory University
- Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University
- Fordham University
- George Washington University
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Indiana University-Bloomington
- Loyola University Chicago
- Loyola University New Orleans
- Marquette University
- University of Miami
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- Providence College
- Rhodes College
- University of Rochester
- Rockhurst University
- Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
- Saint Louis University
- Savannah College of Art and Design
- Secton Hall University
- Southern Methodist University
- Suffolk University
- The University of Tampa
- Texas Christian University
- Ohio State University – Main Campus
- Villanova University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Westminster College
- Xavier University

[See the full list.](#)



THE ARTS

Whether it is creating artworks, performing in musicals, or playing hand bells in the choir, students have the opportunity to explore their talents on the stage and in the art studio. Across all grades, students build on their interests and skills in the arts. Additionally, by coordinating projects with Sacred Heart schools around the world, the visual arts and performing arts programs offer students the opportunity to learn more about other cultures even as they learn more about themselves.

Fine and performing arts instruction begins in grade 7. Signature arts programs include the grade 8 play, which incorporates the entire class and is a tremendous bonding experience; award-winning high school theater productions, and a Show Choir which travels regularly to perform and compete. All students grades 9 to 12 are welcome to audition for theatre productions or to take on technical theatre roles such as stage manager, lighting or sound operator, or backstage crew. Middle school productions are designed to be thoroughly inclusive, creating roles for each student who wishes to be part of the experience.

A student life center, a space that will be the heart and soul of our student community and be home to a new theater, a café, an atrium, and an outdoor terrace, is currently under construction.

ATHLETICS

Villa Duchesne's athletic program provides invaluable lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition, and self-discipline. The program also plays an important part in helping students develop a healthy self-concept as well as a healthy body.



Lower and middle school students can choose from a variety of athletic teams including field hockey, soccer, tennis, volleyball, basketball, golf, lacrosse, and track & field. High school students compete in cross country, basketball, track & field, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, golf, tennis, volleyball, and swimming & diving. Every student that is interested in participating in sports is encouraged to come out and play, no matter what their experience level. More than 78% of students participate in at least one varsity sport. Villa Duchesne teams have won four state athletic championships in the last two years in field hockey, tennis, and golf.

Villa Duchesne is home to state-of-the-art athletic facilities including two gymnasiums, indoor swimming pool, four playing fields including a professional artificial turf field hockey field, eight tennis courts, outdoor track, fitness center, and dance studio.

SCHOOL LIFE

The community aspect at Villa is like no other. With a wealth of student clubs, arts and athletic opportunities, and spiritual life and worship, Villa Duchesne is a vibrant campus community. Both old and new traditions are an incredible aspect of life at Villa. Congé, Field Day, Feast Days, Christmas Basket Mass, Maypole, Saints Start-Up, and Goûter are just a few of the many traditions celebrated throughout the year.

Acorn Club is the Lower School's extended-care program for students through grade 6. Before-school care begins at 7 am with after-school care available until 6 pm. Supervised play, snacks, activities, and time for homework are daily components of this program included in the cost of tuition.



ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Villa Duchesne is located in Frontenac, an inner-ring suburb of St. Louis, Missouri with a population of 3,482. St. Louis, on the western bank of the Mississippi River, has long been considered the gateway to the American West. But the city offers so much more than its impressive Gateway Arch. In 2020, the population was just over 300,000 — with the greater St. Louis area serving as home to more than 2.8 million. St. Louis has a diverse economy with strengths in the agricultural tech, geospatial, service, manufacturing, trade, transportation, and tourism industries. The city is home to nine of the 10 Fortune 500 companies based in Missouri. It is also home to major research universities including St. Louis University and Washington University.

Revitalization of the downtown and the emergence of two advanced technology incubators, T-Rex and the Cortex Innovation Community, have significantly raised the profile of St. Louis on the list of best places to live. Magnify Money ranked the St. Louis region as sixth in the nation for offering a balanced lifestyle thanks to low housing costs and short commute times.

St. Louis has two professional sports teams: Major League Baseball's St. Louis Cardinals and the National Hockey League's St. Louis Blues. In 2019, the city was awarded a Major League Soccer franchise, which will begin play upon the completion of a 22,500-seat stadium in the city's Downtown West neighborhood in 2022.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Villa Duchesne has a stellar reputation in the greater community. Like most of our country, however, the community holds diverse opinions on a variety of topics, and the next Head of School will need to be willing to navigate through them and bring unity. The school has the opportunity to grow and develop in the following areas:

- Instituting a strong enrollment management plan;
- Marketing to effectively communicate the value proposition of the program;
- Expanding the recent fundraising and friend-raising success;
- Maintaining a culture of academic growth and excellence in the spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Villa Duchesne is seeking in its next Head of School an innovative, experienced, and inspiring educational leader who fully embraces the principles of Sacred Heart education and who is eager to make a long-term commitment to the position. The next Head of School will be a practicing Catholic who will offer the following attributes:

Professional Qualifications

- Strong academic credentials, including an advanced degree;
- Exceptional communication skills, oral and written;
- The willingness and ability to play a key leadership role in fundraising, marketing, and community engagement;
- Educational leadership experience, ideally including experience with Catholic, Sacred Heart, or Independent schools;
- Excellent management skills, including the ability to mentor generously and delegate effectively;

- Demonstrated success in working respectfully and effectively with a dedicated faculty and administration;
- Financial acumen;
- A commitment to a researched-based approach to best practices in teaching and learning and student social development and mental health;
- A record of working successfully with a Board of Trustees.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- A confident, charismatic and communicative leader who is eager to partner with the Board and all of the school's stakeholders to shape and execute a sustainable long-term vision;
- A strategic and forward-thinking leader who can advocate for thoughtful change and build consensus;
- A principled and consistent leader who can comfortably balance decisiveness with collaboration, always guided by the mission and values of the school;
- A proven leader who is comfortable delegating appropriate responsibility to the administration, faculty, and staff while maintaining broad oversight;
- An energetic, positive, and joyful leader who inspires trust and demonstrates appreciation for the contributions of all members of the community;
- A warm and approachable leader who will be supportive of school traditions and engaged in the life of Villa Duchesne;
- A leader who will serve as a role model for students and adults, demonstrating humility, integrity, faith in God, and a commitment to service.

TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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