

From the Heart

ST. NICHOLAS SCHOOL, IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY ACADEMY,
AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SCHOOL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

WEAVING TRADITION WITH SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

"I realized I wanted to make things, not market someone else's products."

Dayna Konopelny ('10) has been "making things" since she was young. From painting the windows of the foyer at Immaculate Heart of Mary in junior high, to hand-embroidering items for sale in her teens, to creating Emilka Kono (emilkakono.com), her brand of sustainable clothing with upcycled Ukrainian textiles.

"My business is inspired by baba, Emily, who volunteered at Holy Family Home. Baba worked bingo on Friday nights, that was her thing. On days where there was no school, Baba and Dido would look after us, and I would pick up bingo prizes with her from Value Village, which is where my love of thrifting started."

Since her time at IHMS, Dayna grew up participating in the Ukrainian community, volunteering at Folkorama, working at Ukrainian Park Camp. She graduated from St. Mary's Academy in 2014, completed a degree in theatre design at University of Winnipeg, and graduated with a degree in industrial design from Ontario College of Art

and Design in 2021, focusing on product, service and system design.

"It's interesting how all of these things kind of intersect into what I'm doing now. Everything all plays together."

While she can apply her creativity to different disciplines ("I can weld and stuff"), her current undertakings -- like the beautiful embroidery she gives a new life -- weave together deep respect for art, culture, community and the Earth that were nurtured at IHMS.

"From a systems design perspective, it boggles my mind that people design clothes with the end as the landfill. I wanted to create a system that closes that loop. There are so many things that already exist in the world; I want to use what we have."

Dayna sources Ukrainian textiles that people no longer want, like rushnyky or napkins stained after many wonderful family gatherings, or pillows that may no longer be fashionable. She sees the potential to create something new and meaningful.

"There's something about beautiful textiles that I love. I can take something someone

doesn't want, give it new life, tell a new story."

Earlier this year, Dayna received a \$30,000 REACH Mentorship/Residency for the Arts for 2023, a project of the Shevchenko Foundation in partnership with the Ihnatowycz Family Foundation. This award allows her to continue building Emilka Kono full time, while also participating in a coveted fashion incubator at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson) in Toronto.

"When you truly love something and you know the story behind it and you appreciate the work that's gone into it, that makes people consume less because it means something. You love what it symbolizes."

Asked about advice for this year's IHMS graduating class -- and what she would have told her own grade-eight self, Dayna has this to offer:

"Don't limit yourself. Use tools like Tiktok and Instagram to explore the world around you, different jobs and lifestyles. Stay curious, and keep learning."

We look forward to seeing how Dayna's story unfolds. Best wishes for continued success!



**"Don't limit
yourself. Stay
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IHMS REFLECTIONS

Supporters like you make an extraordinary difference in the lives of all students at IHMS. Thanks to your generosity, newcomers fleeing the war in Ukraine were welcomed into the school community. Sharing the diversity and richness of Canadian and Ukrainian culture and traditions with each other has been enriching for everyone. Nataliia and her son Andrii share what their experience has meant.

Where are you from? When did you arrive in Canada?

We are from Lubny, a city in the Poltava region of Ukraine. We arrived in Canada on May 31, 2022.

Why did you decide to send Andrii to IHMS?

We did not hesitate when we were choosing the school. We had great recommendations about the atmosphere at IHMS and their support for Ukrainian kids, and we were not mistaken. This is not just a school; we have become members of this family. Thank you for accepting us!

What has being a part of the IHMS community meant to you both?

I often hear from parents that their children do not want to go to school. Not my son -- he is happy to go to IHMS. He has a lot of friends there, not only among

kids but also teachers and school staff. To feel their support means a lot to us.

Andrii, what do you like best about IHMS? As a lead in the Ukrainian Week concert, how did it feel to be sharing Ukrainian traditions here in Canada?

I think it's the school community and all our events. Back in Ukraine, I don't remember so many activities like here. Also, our principal is so involved in everyday school routine that makes our study even better.

To see and present Ukrainian culture and tradition in Canada was a little bit unusual. That is new experience for me and my Ukrainian school friends, and it feels very good when we can show our traditions to others and they really like it.

Nataliia, how did you feel seeing Andrii on stage? As a parent, do you feel supported at IHMS?

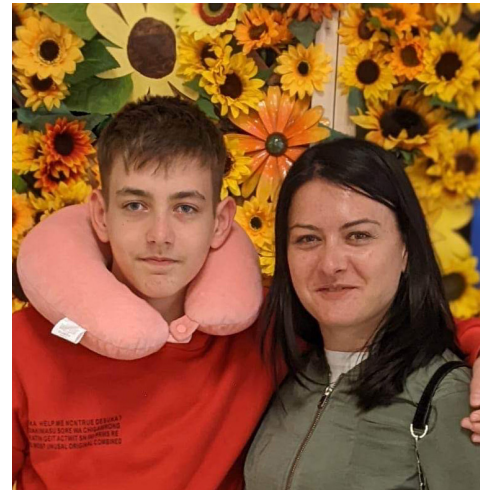
I cried when I saw Andrii in Ukrainian vyshyvanka [traditional embroidered shirt] on the stage. When the concert started, I was amazed with the work done by the teachers, organizers and students. I think it was extraordinary. I was filled with pride. My husband stays in Ukraine, and I cried again that he was missing such an event in his son's life. Do I feel supported by the school? The answer is definitely yes! IHMS helps me raise my child, gives him spiritual education as well.

What advice would you each give to

families / students who are considering joining the IHMS community?

One morning, when I came to school, I observed how the school principal, Mr. Picklyk, met each student and had a short conversation with each of them. It was an ordinary day, nothing special, but I was so impressed to see that the principal knows everyone by name and has time to chat with kids to make them feel so welcome here like they come home. By choosing IHMS, you will give your child love, respect and knowledge. The whole team of the school works for the result. I thank the school from all Ukrainian parents.

To learn more about attending IHMS, visit ihms.mb.ca or call 204-582-5698.



Friends since meeting at IHMS in the 1980s, Melissa and Carol continue to get together as often as possible.

My class at IHMS was small, and our teacher was the infamous Mr. Dan Dram. I spent grades 7-9 with more or less the same group of kids. Friendships that have formed in those few years are still active and intact in my life today. I still get together as often as we can, with Carol Schwalbe and Debbie Brandt, and keep in touch with several others. It never seems as if any time has passed when we get together. We just resume where we left the last time. We never stop talking, laughing, and sharing throughout the whole visit. It's as if no time has passed, and we are back to being in class together.

Several years ago, I moved from Winnipeg to Gimli, changed jobs, and began my first day as a Registered Nurse at Gimli Community Health centre. I was so new, nervous and focused on the care I was giving until I looked at the cellphone of my patient. I recognized a familiar set of initials and asked the patient what school they had attended. Upon hearing the reply, we looked at each other and discovered that one of my very first patients that day was a familiar IHMS classmate! It was as if the Holy Spirit was telling me, "yes, you are just where you need to be!"

I also became fast friends with another IHMS grad, Natalka Hutsulak (Hawaleshka), who was a few grades ahead of me and had never really met at school. We discovered that we both went to the same small, parochial school in the North End. That's all it took to solidify the friendship -- just a mention of IHMS! We get together regularly as we both now live in Gimli and Siglavyk in the Interlake.

Throughout my whole life I have met so many wonderful people through former classmates at IHMS. I just have to mention a classmate's name and next thing you know there is a new connection! --Melissa Campbell, '86

ALUMNI UPDATES



Kathrine Basarab ('96) After graduating from IHMS as a super-niner, Kathrine ('96) attended St. Boniface Diocesan High School. She completed a Bachelor of Arts in 2004 and a Bachelor of Laws in 2008, both from the University of Manitoba. She articulated at the Manitoba Prosecutions Service, was called to the bar in 2009, and has worked as a Crown Attorney ever since, prosecuting everything from traffic tickets to homicides. In 2020, she completed a Master of Laws in Criminal Law and Procedure at Osgoode Hall – York University. Currently, she is the Supervising Senior Crown Attorney of the Training & Development Unit and is responsible for the mentorship and training of the newest lawyers at the office, alongside implementation and delivery of a structured Crown Attorney training and educational program.

A stalwart of the local Ukrainian community, Kathrine is a well-known and talented vocalist. She is a cantor in both the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox tradition, and has regularly assisted at services in this capacity since she was 12 years old - for anyone counting, that's nearly 30 years. Alongside her trio Lyra, she has performed live at Ukrainian festivals across Canada and at countless community events. Undoubtedly, many of you have seen Lyra on stage at Folklorama's Ukraine-Kyiv pavilion. Lyra recently checked off a line item on its 'bucket list' by singing the Canadian national anthem at a Winnipeg Jets' home game earlier this year. But wait, there's more! Kathrine has appeared in seven musicals at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre as part of the Winnipeg-famous Lawyers' Shows, including 2023's sold out run of 9 to 5: the Musical. Who knew that starring as the lead in IHMS musical productions would lead to the RMTTC stage?

She is married to Dr. Andrew Senchuk and the proud Mama of two primary school aged boys, both of whom attend...IHMS, of course!



Janis Roxburgh (Kisil '87), Katherine Fox (Washchyshyn '87), Kristin Foianesi (Keller '87) Cheers to many years! It was a weekend to remember and rekindle friendships from our 1990 St. Mary's Academy crew and a mini reunion remembering IHMS days. Oh the joys of friendships that span decades!



Burdeniuk Brothers The Burdeniuk brothers (l-r Myron, Julian, Colin '91, Myles '88) were invited to open the Winnipeg Police Services Marathon in May 2023 with the Canadian anthem, and they wore their vyshyvanky as tribute to Ukraine. Talented singers and musicians, the brothers have lent their beautiful voices to Divine Liturgies and services (at St. Joseph's and other parishes), weddings, parties and special events, beginning as kids with "Gigi and His Boys", and currently with Hoosli. The brothers are proud to be raising their own children to embrace the beauty of and love for Ukrainian culture and the arts.

ETERNAL MEMORY



Dorothy Bilash

Pani Bilash taught Ukrainian at IHMS in the 1980s with humour, elegance and enthusiasm. Passionate about the beauty of the Ukrainian language, she established the Dorothy Bilash Scholarship for Good Penmanship, which carries on to this day. Many students have learned beautiful Ukrainian cursive writing, thanks to her encouragement and support. Vichnaya pam'yat.



Nestor Budyk

IHMS alumnus and long-time benefactor Nestor Budyk passed away due to complications with cancer. Nestor's love of culture, music and hockey were legendary, as was his generosity. We are grateful for his many years of support. We send our deep condolences to his wife, Alexis Kochan-Budyk and their loved ones. Vichnaya pam'yat.

HAPPENINGS AT IHMS

Immaculate Heart of Mary School will soon be closing the chapter on its 117th year of existence. It's been a year filled with many challenges, but even more rewards and a true 'return to normal'. It's been wonderful to see students excelling in the classroom, on stage, in the gym, growing in their faith, and in so many other areas.

Special acknowledgement and congratulations to the graduating class of 2023. It has been our honour to play a role in developing their God-given talents, which they in turn have generously shared with the school.

This past year we have been repeating history. The Sisters welcomed newcomer families from Ukraine to the school over a century ago; today the school continues to do the same. Nearly 70 students have registered since the war began last February. The school has welcomed and supported them, to help them adjust to a new life so far away from their homes. It's gratifying to see the students finding a level of comfort, learning a new language and making new friends.

After recently touring a new family, at the end of our meeting the mother's eyes filled with tears. She was in disbelief, and filled with gratitude, that her family had traveled across the world to arrive in Canada and find a school that matches their values of education, faith and Ukrainian culture. She didn't think such a place would exist, and that her child would have the opportunity to experience it.

Mrs. Oksana Stanowych and Ms. Stephanie Lutyj will be retiring at the end of this school year. They have both left an indelible impact on countless students. May the Lord's blessings be with them for a much-deserved joyful retirement.

Next time you visit us at IHMS you'll notice some changes. Over the summer several projects are taking place as we continue to create a positive learning environment for the students: The grades 7 & 8 classrooms are getting outfitted with new desks and chairs. The gym was recently repainted and new logo decals were installed, and over the summer the floor will be sanded, repainted and refinished. The new folding chairs (thank you, donors!) have arrived and are conveniently stored on roll-away carts. The library is being completely automated and the entire collection digitized, which will make it easier to search topics, and simply use a scanner to sign out a book. New computers are being installed in each classroom.

I invite alumni to our 'welcome back to school picnic' on Wednesday, September 27. It will take place on the school yard. Hope to see you there. Wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer! -Rod Picklyk, Principal

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have an update you would like to share? Did you just get married or have a baby? Where are you living? What have you been up to? Share your news at alumni@ihms.mb.ca

Have you moved? Newsletter still showing up at your childhood home? Let us know your new address! Email us at info@lubovfoundation.ca so we can update your records!



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