

For immediate release

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Class of 2011 Celebrates Milestone for 1:1 Laptop Program

Four years ago, Queen of Peace High School implemented its 1:1 laptop program and became the first school in the Chicagoland area to provide individual laptops to teachers and students at every level. The Class of 2011, the first class to complete a four-year cycle of the program, recently celebrated this milestone and its commencement ceremony on May 28.

Prior to graduation, Peace seniors, recent alumnae, faculty and administration talked about the advancements in the program to WGN-TV. The news station visited Queen of Peace for a follow-up to a piece that aired four years ago when the laptop program was first implemented.

After experiencing the program for four years, the seniors say they have benefited immensely from Peace's mobile computing and ubiquitous technology, which has opened up a "whole new world of information."

"The laptop program gave me a lot of opportunities I wouldn't have been exposed to in a different environment," senior Mary Kate Murray said. "I was able to incorporate a variety of media and information into my work, which helped me to be more creative. I conducted more in-depth research and worked more efficiently because I was able to access a computer 24/7.

"Peace taught me to embrace changes in the technological world, and I am very grateful."

Physics and Digital Engineering teacher Karen Amador had high hopes for the program four years ago and is satisfied with the results she has seen in the classroom.

"When we do a lab and gather data, the students can pop the laptop open, enter the data and create graphs so quickly – all what they used to do by hand," said Amador, who is also

coach of the school's Robotics Team, the only all-girls school-sponsored team in Illinois.

"There's a speed that we have now that we didn't have before."

Each student's laptop is more than just a tool; it enhances technology integration in all areas of Peace's curriculum. The school's wireless campus also includes an Interactive Videoconferencing Center, which supports global communication, the Technology Maintenance Center (TMC) - where students' laptops are repaired on site, and engineering and computer repair courses.

"Because the world is so technologically forward, I feel that the technology environment at Peace has given me an advantage over students who weren't exposed to so many different resources," said Murray, co-valedictorian of the Class of 2011.

Queen of Peace is a best practice school and other high schools in the area and out of state visit Peace often to learn more about its model of success. Faculty members and students are evaluated as they use technology based on National Education Technology Standards (NETS). Students and faculty routinely receive professional development and training instruction to keep up with the latest technology innovations.

"We were able to get so much more out of the program because we were all able to use our computers together," said Sydney Hardwick, who will attend Purdue University in the fall and major in engineering.

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Photo Caption:

Queen of Peace's Class of 2011 was the first class to complete a four-year cycle of Peace's 1:1 laptop program. Students say Queen of Peace's dedication to seamless integration of technology will give them a great advantage over other students in college.

