



By Arielle Waller, St. Ursula Academy Class of 2011

We all have dreams. Big ones, small ones, ones the size of your head. To be entrepreneurs, businesswomen, doctors, surgeons, astronauts, scientists, the first of something. But young women do not always have the necessary means of achieving them. Yet fortunately for us, St. Ursula has given us those means.

Maya Angelou once said that “education helps one cease being intimidated by strange situations.” And entering St. Ursula freshman year did, indeed, feel like a strange situation. In my mind, I was thinking that everyone at Ursula was insanely intelligent. I was questioning whether or not I had made the right choice to come here. But don’t worry, I did and so did all of you. I was intimidated because I had not yet gone through the academic experience that is St. Ursula. I did not understand the extent of my own intellectual capabilities.

St. Ursula has fostered our growth and helped us to develop as students by always pushing us to do our very best work. Right when we were positive that an essay was too much and that a test was definitely pushing it, our teachers assured us that we could handle it. And handle it we did, with a minor panic attack here or there. We have learned how to think critically about situations and how to use our time wisely (because not only will that English teacher be skeptical if you turn that paper in at 3 in the morning, but you’ll also be sleeping by lunchtime). Our minds have been continually molded to investigate all the different aspects of a problem. We have built bridges, chairs, even cities, in the classrooms. The bridge has to hold more than twenty pounds? Let’s try moving some pieces around. The essay has to be less than two pages? We can

condense a few paragraphs. Give us a problem, and we will do everything in our power to find a solution. We have been challenged because our teachers knew of our immense potential – our potential to become leaders in our classrooms and, eventually, in our career fields. We intend to keep developing our potential as we leave St. Ursula to become leaders outside of 1339 East McMillan Street.

We are National Achievement and National Merit Scholars. We are members of the National Honor Society, the French National Honor Society, and the Spanish National Honor Society. We are women with not just a knack for the academic but a prowess for it. Now, moving onto college, we are so prepared to reach our dreams, to reach beyond our dreams. College will, undoubtedly, be a strange situation (what is co-ed, again?). But secure with the knowledge of our own abilities and talents, college is nothing that we cannot handle and surely nothing for us to be intimidated by. "The fact that the adult American Negro female emerges a formidable character is often met with amazement, distaste and even belligerence. It is seldom accepted as an inevitable outcome of the struggle won by survivors, and deserves respect if not enthusiastic acceptance." We are strong women ready to not only face the world but also to change it. We are future members of the United Nations, future biomedical engineers, and future newscast producers. We have our dreams, and you better believe that we are going to make them reality. People may say our dreams need to be tamed down, and we'll tell them theirs aren't wild enough.