



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMCHS Girls Basketball Team Shares Passion for the Game & Community

Although it was a cold Monday in early February, the gym inside the Boys and Girls Brigade was hot with activity as the St. Mary Catholic Schools varsity girls basketball team worked with eager Brigade boys and girls on their basketball skills.

Last year, Coach Kali Sawyer (SMC alumna) was approached by Paul Ruthven, gym activity coordinator with the Boys and Girls Brigade in Neenah looking for volunteers to teach middle-school aged kids basketball skills. Coach Sawyer knew it would be a good fit. "When Paul approached me, I knew we had to take the time out to work with these kids. The girls on the team already do a lot of service in the community, but I knew it would be a special experience to teach the Brigade kids something the girls are truly passionate about," said Sawyer. Fellow SMC alumni David Weiss and Eric Neumeyer, who both graduated from SMC in 2002 and who are also both on the staff at the Brigade, had a hand in encouraging Coach Sawyer and the team to work with the Brigade.

During the skills session, it was often difficult to tell who was more excited during the drills and games—the varsity players or the Brigade members. Following the program, Mr. Ruthven commented that SMCHS puts on the best program and that he was impressed by the poise and maturity the team displayed. "It is very gratifying to see our kids interact with young adults who model the character traits (respect, sportsmanship, responsibility, teamwork) that we try to instill in our kids," said Ruthven.

Coach Sawyer and the team finished up a fairly successful season and are doing well in the post-season tournament, after a year of rebuilding. Sawyer commented, “It has been my goal to return SMCHS Girls Basketball to the level it was in the past, and to rebuild the tradition of great student athletes. This varsity group has been taking monumental steps in that direction. I am so proud of the young women they are and the amazing role models they are for younger kids in the community!”

St. Mary Catholic High School (SMCHS) a regional high school, is part of [St. Mary Catholic Schools \(SMCS\)](#). The system also includes St. Mary Elementary Schools (St. Margaret Mary and St. Gabriel in Neenah, and St. Mary in Menasha), as well as St. St. Mary Catholic Middle School in Neenah. SMCHS is dedicated to the individual development of each student by providing an education focused on faith, academics and service.

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