

**High School Spring Sports Award Ceremony**  
**Student Reflection By Mary Tezak '15**

This past season our lacrosse team coined the term “Sporty Smirls”. As many of you know, a smirl is a Saint Mary’s Academy girl. Now, sporty smirls are a special breed. All of the athletes we honor today are sporty smirls. Sporty smirls take the four Loretto values of faith, community, justice, and respect and translate them to the field, court, or course. I am proud to have been a sporty smirl for all four years here at Saint Mary’s Academy. As athletes, we have all had our ups and downs. I am sure the field hockey girls will never forget beating Kent by one point in order to proceed to the semifinal game in 2012. Lacrosse players may still be relishing in the victory of the one game we won last year. Sporty smirls win and lose with grace. Above all else, athletics at Saint Mary’s Academy have given us a community. We share our victories and losses. Sporty smirls create a camaraderie that brings us a joy that is unmatched by any physical victory. Over these past four years we have run countless sprints, survival shuffled through many a timed mile, tumbled into bear crawl suicides, and cheered over every goal, point, birdie, and PR. Being a sporty smirl has given us a community. The friendships we have formed through mouths full of trash cake are unique and unforgettable. I find that each lacrosse and field hockey season I become closer with my teammates than I ever expected. The girls I played field hockey with on C team freshman year are my closest friends to this day. Our lacrosse team has bonded over countless team dinners and practices, and of course, the infamous finstagram. Something about athletics brings people together. In giving 100% of oneself on the field, one finds a community. A community of coaches who will support their players no matter what and push them to improve each and every day. A community of parents who have been known to fill the hill with cheers and bellies with food at team dinners. A community of fans who create posters and encourage us in games against our fiercest rivals. A community of teammates and friends who run, laugh, and cry together. Over the past eight seasons, I have found that I look forward to meeting up with this community at 4 pm everyday. I have found lifelong friends and been taught unforgettable lessons on the field. We will always relish our time as sporty smirls. We will never forget to smirl so hard we can’t see the haters. I believe that this community will follow each of us wherever we go. Every time a sporty smirl takes the field or classroom her peers know just how much the SMA spirit has translated into every aspect of her life. I am so blessed to have been a sporty smirl, and I hope I can speak for my teammates and friends when I say we will never forget the wonderful bonds we have formed here.