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Padua Franciscan High School

Press Release

Padua Franciscan High School Makes History Unveiling Second Mascot

PARMA, Ohio – (August 23, 2024) Padua Franciscan High School’s second mascot named Bella made her debut at a school rally on Friday, August 23, 2024.

Padua is among the first, if not the first area high school to establish two distinct mascot characters – paralleling professional mascot programs like the Cleveland Guardians, Browns, and Cavaliers – all of whom have multiple characters that interact with each other.

Padua’s female mascot costume project has been more than a year in the making. Bella is the sister of the school’s other mascot named Bruno. Students voted on her name, which pays tribute to the school’s Italian roots.

“Introducing a female Bruin as a mascot is a sign of diversity and inclusivity, and an opportunity to have our mascot team evenly representing our co-ed student population,” said Student Life Coordinator Rebecca Simna, who oversees the school’s mascot program.

Both Simna and Vice President of Strategic Communication Rachel (Teron) DeGirolamo ’02, who oversees the school’s branding, managed the costume creation process. “We hope the additional mascot will elevate our school spirit and be a part of many new school traditions,” said DeGirolamo.

Padua enlisted the help of professional mascots in the area to elevate the program. For several years, Padua has held a mascot boot camp, with the help of the Cleveland Guardians’ Hot Dog performers, along with mascot representatives from the Browns and Monsters. They spent hours working with students on Padua’s mascot team to take their performances, gestures and skits to the next level. “You know they’ve succeeded when they put a smile on the faces of everyone they encounter,” said Simna.

“We look forward to seeing Bella interact with Bruins and future Bruins for many years to come,” said DeGirolamo.

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School Background: Padua Franciscan High School is located at 6740 State Road in Parma, Ohio. Padua is a Catholic, college-prep, co-educational school with 775 students. Padua was founded by Franciscans in 1961 and bases its educational philosophy on the life and spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi. The school’s mission is to develop the unique talents of each student, while giving them the skills they need to succeed in college and beyond.
