



## Press Release

For more information contact  
Barbara Esteves-Moore  
292-5134, ext. 272 or  
[estevesmooreb@dominican-campus.org](mailto:estevesmooreb@dominican-campus.org)

### St. Cecilia senior named Jingle Bell Run/Walk Honoree

The Williamson County Jingle Bell Run/Walk to benefit the Arthritis Foundation has named St. Cecilia Academy senior Morgan Poteet as the honoree. The event will take place on Dec. 4 in downtown Franklin. Supporting her in the run/walk will be over 60 of her classmates, teachers, and staff from St. Cecilia.

The Arthritis Foundation is the leading health organization addressing the needs of some 46 million Americans living with arthritis, one of the nation's leading causes of disability. Morgan is one of those suffering—she was diagnosed at the age of 7 with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA). Her goal as the honoree for the event is not only to raise money for the foundation, but to also raise awareness for the disease.

“Awareness is important so that both teachers and students can be informed about what it is like to have JRA,” said Morgan. “If teachers know that students can have arthritis, their reaction and understanding to those with the disease models behaviors showing other students on how to act so that bullying doesn’t happen. I want everyone to know that kids can get arthritis.”

Serving in the role of honoree is not just a title. Morgan is in the community giving speeches, raising money for the cure, and speaking about her disease. This isn’t always easy and requires a great deal of confidence. She never imagined herself speaking before her school or on television, but she can because of the caring environment at St. Cecilia Academy.

“Before coming to St. Cecilia I was painfully shy and didn’t really ever talk,” Morgan shares. “At St. Cecilia you can be yourself and not be judged. Students and teachers really care about me and my health. It is a great feeling to know I can share my story without being judged.”

Morgan is not letting JRA define who she is. She is the editor of her school’s yearbook, works part-time at a grocery store, is involved in German-Latin Club and Model United Nations at St. Cecilia, volunteers at a nursing home, and also finds time to hang out with friends.

While she once dreamed of being normal, her dream now is “that a cure will be found so that all of the children suffering from arthritis can wake up every day pain free and with the feeling of being normal.”

St. Cecilia Academy—Nashville’s oldest private high school founded in 1860 by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation—is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary throughout the 2010-2011 school year. The Academy has been named to the Top 50 best Catholic high schools in the U.S. list five times since 2004. Eighty-five percent of the 53 Class of 2010 members were offered college scholarships totaling \$5.5 million. That equals an average of over \$100,000 in offered college scholarships per graduate.

*Photograph outline: St. Cecilia Academy senior Morgan Poteet*

#