PRESS RELEASE AFTER MAY 6, 2017

HAVERN SCHOOL CELEBRATES ITS JUBILEE

 Havern School, a non-profit independent coed day school with grades K-8 in Littleton, is celebrating its birthday. Not just any birthday, but a jubilee. Fifty years ago, on September 12, 1966, the school opened to 24 students with special learning needs and nine faculty and staff members, high upon a hill at 4000 S. Wadsworth Blvd.

 Opening schools was nothing new to Havern’s founders, the Sisters of Loretto. They had been in the business since 1812 when their order was established with a major goal of providing schools for children in rural Kentucky. By 1824 the Sisters were on a movement to open schools especially for girls across the developing West. In response to Bishop Machebeuf’s invitation to open a school, they arrived in Denver in June 1864 and by September of that year, they opened St. Mary’s Academy, which still flourishes today. Their response to several succeeding bishops and archbishops continued. Three private schools and twenty-six parochial schools were established, ten of which are still in operation today in the Archdiocese of Denver.

In 1963, two teachers, Sr. Barbara Schulte and Sr. Dorothy Hurley, attended a master’s degree program at Syracuse University specializing in the educating of the “perceptually handicapped child” later referred to as learning disabilities. After completing the master’s program and doing an internship at Pathways in Norristown, Pennsylvania, they returned to Littleton to join Sr. Patricia Miller and Sr. Bridget O’Toole in the planning and opening of a school to educate children with learning disabilities in the Denver area. They chose the name Havern School, after Sr. Ann Havern, one of the founding Sisters of Loretto. Sr. Celine Marie De Smet was the school’s first director and Sr. Barbara Schulte was the final Sister of Loretto to serve as the Director. During her tenure as Head of School, Cathleen Pasquariello has brought the school to a new level of performance.

In the beginning, there were few suitable curriculum and teaching materials available, so the Sisters taught during the day and created their own instructional materials in the evening. In 1970 the school was incorporated and turned over to a private non-denominational Board of Trustees and remains today as an independent school accredited by the Association of Colorado Independent Schools.

Today, Havern School enjoys a half-century legacy of successfully meeting the education needs of children with learning disabilities. The school serves children from 48 different zip codes, offering a 4-1 student to staff ratio. The average size of a homeroom is ten to fifteen students, depending upon grade level. Student instruction is implemented in small groups of three to five children. All lead teachers have advanced degrees and are supported by three speech/language pathologists, three occupational therapists and a school psychologist.

 Since its beginning in 1966, the school has shared facilities with the Sisters at their 12.3 acre campus high on a hill in Littleton. When the Sisters of Loretto announced their intent to sell the campus, the Havern School Board of Trustees recognized the exciting opportunity to purchase the school’s home while preserving its legacy and providing exceptional benefits to the students by updating classroom space, expanding the middle school and creating a learning evaluation center which will serve children throughout the greater metropolitan Denver community.

 A multi-million dollar campaign to raise the funds to purchase the building and make renovations is in its early stages. Sr. Lydia Peña, S.L. is among those who are committing time and talent to to bring in treasure from the wider community to make this campaign a reality.

To quote Sr. Lydia, “Philos – love, Anthropos – human, is what motivates us as philanthropic people.” There are many non-profits needing financial help today. Havern is an exceptional school with a unique model of intervention services and educational programming for children with diagnosed learning disabilities – it truly is like no other.

 For more information on the school and all it has to offer, please visit [www.havernschool.org](http://www.havernschool.org).