

THE GOOD NEWS

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

Providing tuition assistance to students at Community of Saints Regional Catholic School



Dollar-for-Dollar Match Now!

Help us get to 100% of our goal for tuition assistance by June 30th.

See page 2 for details.

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Students Raise Money for Youth Fighting Cancer

See page 6 for details and more school news.

COS Purchases St. Michael's Campus Honors Tradition of Catholic Education and Gives School Room to Grow

Editors Note: In May, Community of Saints Regional Catholic School purchased the property previously owned by the Church of St. Michael. Trustees have been managing the property since 2016 when St. Michael suspended operations. During that time, COS has assumed the full cost for maintaining the school building. I spoke with Melinda Frias, Chair of the school's Board of Directors, who discussed the purchase, and what it means for the school's future.

Q How did this opportunity come about and was it a difficult decision for the Board to make?

Melinda: A little over a year ago, when the Board of Directors first began meeting, we needed to quickly negotiate a 20-year lease for the building so we could get a loan for a new boiler. Prior to negotiating the lease, the Archdiocese let us know that if they decided to sell the property, we would have first right of refusal. So it's something we were always considering, it's just that the opportunity presented itself much sooner than we thought. Everyone on the Board understood that owning the property greatly increases our scope of responsibilities, but we all agreed this was a wonderful opportunity and purchasing the property would be in the best interests of the school.

— Continued on page 7



MESSAGE FROM **father steve**

Dear Alums, Friends and Families of Community of Saints:

This issue presents an extensive, informative interview with Melinda Frias, Chair of the Board of Directors of Community of Saints Regional Catholic School. She lays out in detail the purchase of the St. Michael's campus by COS. We now own our buildings and property; we can make the physical improvements to better serve our students' and teachers' needs. As our enrollment grows we can plan for expansion.

COS has a flourishing partnership with the University of Notre Dame entered into three years ago. Presently this tri-partite partnership touches all our teachers and students in one or more ways.

Recently COS was selected as one of nine schools nationally to participate in a three-year fellowship sponsored by The Center for STEM Education of the University of Notre Dame. (STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Math.) Three of our teachers will spend two weeks on the campus at Notre Dame this summer. This is a two school year, three-summer program. This project seeks to help all our students engage and excel in the STEM disciplines through research and the translation of research into practice.

The Latino Enrollment Initiative of the University of Notre Dame has assisted us in enrolling and retaining Latino students. Again our principal and assistant principal will spend a weekend at Notre Dame in further training.

We are in our second year of a Blended Learning Pilot program funded by a grant from the University of Notre Dame's Higher-Powered Learning Program. Blended Learning combines individualized online learning with large and small group instruction.

Your school and your students are thriving and are recognized for first-class educational opportunities. Thank you. This happens only because of you.

With Gratitude,

Fr. Steve Adrian

Canonical Administrator of COS



DOLLAR-FOR-DOLLAR MATCHING UNTIL JUNE 30

100% of funds go for tuition assistance.

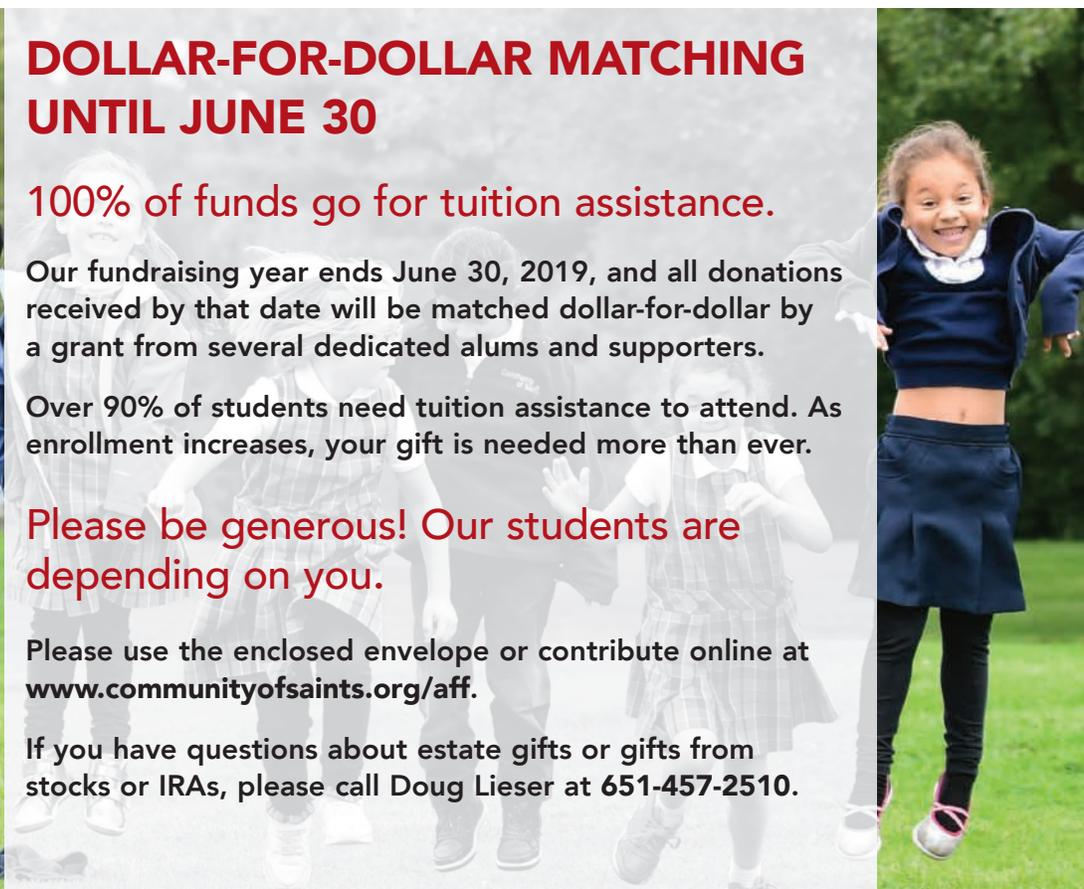
Our fundraising year ends June 30, 2019, and all donations received by that date will be matched dollar-for-dollar by a grant from several dedicated alums and supporters.

Over 90% of students need tuition assistance to attend. As enrollment increases, your gift is needed more than ever.

Please be generous! Our students are depending on you.

Please use the enclosed envelope or contribute online at www.communityofsaints.org/aff.

If you have questions about estate gifts or gifts from stocks or IRAs, please call Doug Lieser at 651-457-2510.



Tom McKeown Knows a Good Education Changes Lives

When Tom McKeown talks, people pay attention. He drops pearls of wisdom like a toddler scatters Cheerios. Members of the Alums & Friends & Families learned this soon after he joined the group 12 years ago. Since then, Tom has played a major role in building support for tuition assistance, and has been one of the top annual contributors to the fund. Last year, Tom ratcheted his commitment up a notch by agreeing to serve on the school board.

Tom's support for Community of Saints (COS) grows out of the simple belief that a good education can change a life; he knows it changed his. "My mother was widowed at the age of 33 when my father was killed in an accident at work," Tom explained. "It was the middle of the Depression. I was nine years old, I had a younger brother and my mother was pregnant." Some well-intentioned people advised Tom's mother to send her boys out to work to earn money for the family, but she refused to let them leave school. "She made sure we graduated from high school and she insisted we go to college."

Tom still isn't sure how she managed it, but he and his brother both earned degrees from St. John's University. Tom's brother got his PhD and eventually became Vice President of Research at 3M. Tom pursued a career in business, climbing the ranks at Honeywell and then at St. Paul Companies, where he retired as the Chief Administrative Office .

Tom credits his mother for having the wisdom and will-power to make sure her children got the best education possible. He says his work at COS is all about providing the same opportunity to children today. "The leadership and staff have developed a school that is superb," Tom said. "Our students graduate from high school and go on to college, or enroll in some other secondary education program. The school has a sterling record and they're constantly working to make it even better."

Having grown up in a single parent family where money was tight, Tom is also moved by the promise made possible by tuition assistance. "We don't turn anybody away because they don't have money," Tom stated. "As a Catholic school, that's what we should do, help families."



"Tom is one of the most ethical, dedicated, wise, and intelligent people I've ever known. It is a privilege to serve with him on our Alums and Friends and Families Board."

— EILEEN MCMAHON

"Tom and his wife Mary are very generous and have a passion for COS. Tom always reminds us that everything we do is so that our kids get a superior education."

— ROY FERBER '55

"Countless times when contemplating which path to take, I often think to myself, 'What would Tom do?' Or, I just ask him, because I know he will take the time to listen and then thoughtfully share his perspective."

— BRIDGET KRAMER,
COS PRINCIPAL



Tom McKeown and Mary Cullen married 35 years ago after each lost a spouse to cancer. In May, the family gathered to celebrate Tom's 90th birthday.

Back Row (l-r): Dan McKeown, Hugh Cullen '73, Joe Cullen '78, Mark McKeown, Steve McKeown, John McKeown, Terry McKeown, Tom Cullen '71, and Tom McKeown.

Middle Row (l-r): Mary Elizabeth Cullen '74, Anne Cullen Miller '77, and Mary Syverud McKeown.

Seated: Mary and Tom

Congratulations to COS Class of 2015!

High School Graduates

We always like to check in with our alums as they graduate from high school to see what they plan to do next. We haven't tracked down everyone yet but here's a quick look at where some members of this class are headed.

Anthony Charles | Century College

Clara Dubuc | Ohio State University

Peggy Dunn | Creighton University

Isabela Everett | University of Minnesota

Bonita Franco | Anoka-Ramsey Community College

Paige Goaley | North Dakota State University

José Gonzalez-Perez | Vocational School

Tara Hinz | Bethel University

Rebecca Lackner | University of Wisconsin – River Falls

Elijah Lonetree | Inver Hills Community College

Kayla Maloney | University of Iowa

Serena Monita | Dakota County Technical College

Allie Reding | Luther College

Justina Shenouda | University of Minnesota

Lauren Shier | St. Catherine University

Lili Silva | Loyola University of Chicago

Pictured above are (L-R): Justina Shenouda, Peggy Dunn, Allie Reding, Kayla Maloney, Tara Hinz, Bonita Franco, Serena Monita, José Gonzelz Perez

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Paige Goaley | North Dakota State University

Paige received a full 4-year scholarship to attend NDSU, including both an academic scholarship and a Division 1 soccer scholarship. Paige is a member of the National Honor Society, was a 4-year letter winner in basketball and soccer, and received All Conference and All State honors in soccer.

Justina Shenouda | University of Minnesota

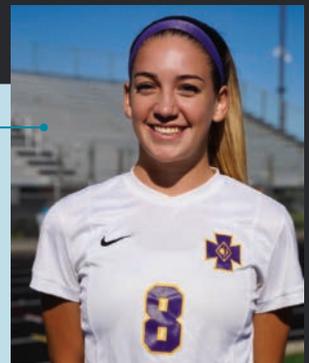
Justina was accepted into Princeton and offered a full scholarship to attend DePaul University, but turned both down to attend the University of Minnesota. She chose the U of M because she'll be able to complete her bachelor's degree in just two years, having participated in an accelerated program that allowed her to take classes on the University campus as a high school student. Justina is a pre-med major, and shaving two years off of her undergraduate studies will make a big difference as she works towards her goal of becoming a doctor.

Clara Dubuc — National Honor Society Member, AP Scholar with Distinction

Rebecca Lackner — National Honor Society Member

Many members of this class received additional honors and scholarships for their academic performance, and many stand out for their accomplishments in athletics. We're sorry we can't list everything here, but we do want to congratulate all of them.

To the Class of 2015 — we wish you success!



Reunion Sunday Mass

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2019

School families and friends celebrated Reunion Sunday Mass and then gathered for refreshments. It was a time to reminisce and reconnect.



About 50 alums attended, coming from as far as New Jersey, Texas, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Northern Minnesota. They took pictures and remembered fellow classmates who have passed.

“What a time we had”

Jim LeTourneau '69 Recaps 50-Year Reunion

The evening began with 4:15 p.m. Mass at St. Matthew's, led by Father Adrian. Many classmates attended and all were amazed by his command of the Mass. He never once read from the missal, but did it all from memory.

Following Mass, we had a chance to tour the old school. Sister Anne Becker led the charge. As we wandered the halls of all three floors and the gym, what memories were stirred and stories told as we went from floor to floor.

Proceeds from a raffle totaling \$300 were donated to Community of Saints Regional Catholic School. We also donated the poster-size class photos we made for the event to the parish archives.

The evening ended way too soon, so we will be planning some follow-up get-togethers.

THANK YOU!

Special thanks to the '69 Reunion Planning Committee: Kathy Littfin Denice (Roering) Marruffo, Barb (Plante) Ludin, Pat Brysky, Deb Prokop, Barb (Mudek) Nerka, Roxanne (Hauck) Foss, Cathy (Cruz) Gooch, Dave Krull, Mark Preuss, Tim Quinlan, and Jim Letourneau.

Kathy (Koehnen) Schowalter '70 holds up an enlarged photo of the 8th grade class of 1969.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

May 16, 2020

**CLASS OF 1970
50 YEAR CLASS REUNION**



University of Notre Dame Awards STEM Grant to COS

COS was one of just nine schools chosen for the STEM fellowship program, which was open to applicants from public, charter, and Catholic elementary and middle schools across the U.S. The University of Notre Dame's STEM education is committed to providing all young people, especially those from underserved communities, with a high-quality STEM education. The program begins this summer when three COS math and science teachers travel to the University's campus in South Bend, Indiana, for evidence-based training. It's the beginning of a multi-year process meant to enhance the school's education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Watch for more information in the coming issues.

Coin Drive Raises \$1,736.05 to Support Youth with Cancer

For the Lenten Service project, students blew past the initial fundraising goal to support NEGU (Never Ever Give Up), a nonprofit that helps youth fightin cancer. The money, raised through a coin drive, was used to purchase items and toys for NEGU Joy Jars, which are distributed through hospitals across the country to young people battling cancer. COS students also wrote cards of encouragement to children with cancer who received the Joy Jars. "We're always teaching our kids to make a difference and there was a ton of energy around this service project," reported Principal Bridget Kramer. "We never expected to raise this much money and the kids had a blast doing it."



WEM Renews 3-Year Grant

The WEM Foundation, founded by retired Cargill CEO and philanthropist Whitney MacMillan and his wife Elizabeth, has announced that it is renewing a three-year, unrestricted grant to COS for \$100,000 a year.

Archbishop Hebda Visits COS

After being snowed out in January, Archbishop Bernard Hebda celebrated Mass with students in April. Following the Mass, the Archbishop visited several classrooms. Here, he watches children use the school's new Chromebooks, received through a grant from the University of Notre Dame. The Chromebooks are part of the school's Blended Learning program, which promotes individualized instruction and gives teachers realtime feedback.



PHOTO BY EMILY KOWAL

8th Graders Head North for Annual Trip to Wolf Ridge

Students trekked to the North Shore and spent three days at the Wolf Ridge Environmental Center. Among the many activities, they hiked the Superior Trail, learned about Ojibwe culture, and took in some pretty fantastic views.



COS Purchases St. Michael's Campus, continued from page 1

How does owning the property help the school?

Melinda: First, it provides long-term stability to our school community. Some people weren't sure what would happen to COS after St. Michael's suspended operations in 2016, and this makes it clear, we're here to stay. That's an important guarantee.

It also gives us choices as we address one of the school's biggest challenges, the fact that student enrollment is growing every year. That's a really good problem to have and we're proud of our growth — more than 25% over the last three years. Now that we own the property, we have much more flexibility to expand and shape the space to accommodate the types of learning experiences we want children to have. As we consider investing in things like additional space for our preschool program, or upgrading the gym, it's easier to make those decisions now that we own the property.

How much did it cost to buy the property?

Melinda: The purchase price was the amount required to settle the parish's outstanding debts. The parish owed \$240,000 for a lay pension plan, and there was an additional deficit of \$200,000 that needed to be covered. We paid \$440,000 for the entire campus, which resolved both debts. The property is currently valued at \$2.5-\$3 million, so it was a good deal.

Is there a downside to the decision — anything that worries you?

Melinda: Buying the campus increases our scope of responsibility. The property is one square city block. In addition to the school, there is the parish center and the rectory. We were already responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the school, which is the largest building on campus, but this is an increase. We had to ask ourselves, do we have the resources and expertise to manage all of it?

The other critical factor is making sure this decision doesn't put a strain on our budget. We don't want this debt hanging over our heads for a long time.

The mortgage is a new monthly expense — where will that money come from?

Melinda: The Board of Directors has a robust plan to raise money that should allow us to quickly retire the debt and cover the costs of some deferred maintenance.

"Now that we own the property, we have much more flexibility to expand and shape the space to accommodate the types of learning experiences we want children to have."

— MELINDA FRIAS, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It's a targeted campaign, it's already underway, and we expect to retire the debt within a year.

Will any funds from tuition assistance be used for the mortgage?

Melinda: No, the Board's campaign to retire the mortgage debt will not overlap or interfere with fundraising for tuition assistance. The school is here today because of the generous support for tuition assistance from A&F&F. Over 90% of our students need tuition assistance to be able to attend school, and we've never had to turn a family away because they couldn't afford the cost. Those funds are dedicated solely to tuition assistance and we need that support to continue.

What are the plans for the campus?

Melinda: We don't expect any big changes for now. We currently have two priests who are tenants in the rectory, including Fr. Andrew Brinkmann, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and that will continue. Nuns have rented the convent space above the parish center, and we expect those kinds of relationships to continue. We will work with the community to continue St. Michael's tradition of the Adoration Chapel.

Aside from that, Board members will work to prioritize deferred maintenance so we can start moving forward with much needed projects like a new roof for the school. We'll also start thinking ahead about how we want to structure our space to best meet the needs of our growing student body.

Now that the school owns the campus, what's the impact on the community?

Melinda: As a St. Michael's alum, I'm thrilled with the underlying commitment to maintain Catholic education in this community. The school leadership is already dedicated to providing quality educational experiences to all families. Now that we own the property, I'm excited to see what else our school can do to serve this community.

**COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

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PHOTO BY PEG LINDLOF

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