

THE GOOD NEWS

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

Providing tuition assistance for Community of Saints Regional Catholic School



Let's Meet the Challenge

WE'RE AT 81% OF OUR GOAL

SEE HOW YOU CAN HELP US EARN AN EXTRA \$65,000

DEADLINE: September 30

See details on page 7

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Two COS Students Win Flaherty Scholarships

Last Spring, eighth grade students Aleah Vasquez and Isaac Enriquez were selected to receive Flaherty Scholarships. The award goes to high performing students who could not otherwise afford tuition at a faith-based high school. The Foundation works with the students' families and their chosen schools for all four years of high school to make sure they have the support necessary to pay for tuition and related costs. This year, Aleah is attending De La Salle High School, while Isaac is enrolled at Cretin-Derham Hall High School.

Flaherty Scholar Aleah Vasquez '16

Aleah lives on the West Side with her mother, and often attends church at Our Lady of Guadalupe with her grandmother, who is a driving force in Aleah's life. In fact, she is the reason Aleah became a student at Community of Saints (COS). "Aleah attended public schools until 5th grade, but I was worried about middle school," explained Aleah's grandmother, Frances Rocha. "I thought it would be better for her to be at a smaller school." A friend told Frances about COS and after a visit, she was sure it was the right place for her granddaughter. Aleah took a little more convincing.

"At first I didn't think I would like it because it was such a small school," said Aleah. "But on my first day a lot of kids helped me out. They told me where I should go and what I was supposed to do, and the teachers stayed after school to help me with my homework." That extra attention was important because Aleah found the school work challenging at first. "There was a lot of homework and things I didn't know," remembered Aleah. "But after a while, I got the hang of it."



Aleah "I've learned that if I want to do something in life, I have to do it for myself, but I will have help." Pictured with mother, Angela Vasquez (left) and grandmother, Frances Rocha (right).

At the start of eighth grade, Frances impressed upon Aleah that preparing for high school was serious business. "I wanted her to know that this is where it counts," Frances said. "I told her, 'You need to make 100% effort. If you don't do the work, you'll be like the rest of us.'"

Aleah's grandmother grew up on the West Side as one of nine children. "We were poor and life was hard. I was the only one in my family to graduate from high school," Frances recalled. "It's important to me that my grandchildren get a good education, so I help pay tuition. Aleah knows that a lot of kids don't get this opportunity."

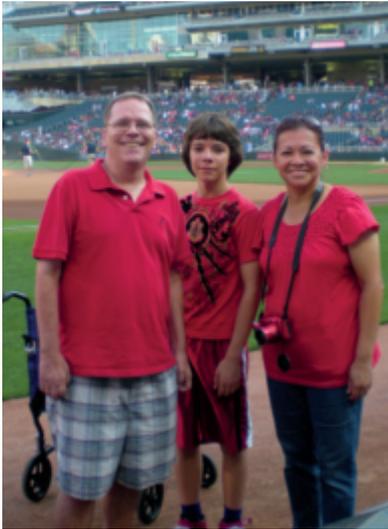
Frances' encouragement paid off with Aleah earning straight As. "That was while she

Continued on page 6

MESSAGE FROM **father steve**

Dear Alums & Friends & Families,

I am ready for the school year to begin; mostly I am ready to again see staff and students I have not seen over the summer months. COS students are remarkable people. They are bright and enthusiastic; they are energetic and involved; their lives are full and their appetite to discover something new is boundless. And, not a few are genuine heroes.



COS student Kieran White helps care for his dad, Bob, who was diagnosed with ALS in 2012. Also pictured with mother, Argeria.

is a volunteer tutor at Community of Saints School one day a week. Bob has a broad grin and a wall-to-wall smile. Kieran and Bob participate together in the weekly school Mass on Thursdays.

I first met Kieran and his Mom, Argeria, and his Dad, Bob nine years ago. Classmates know Kieran as a straight-A student with a fine sense of humor. He is a musician and is always eager to spend time riffing on his electric guitar. He enjoys martial arts and practicing with his friends. He is a well-rounded eighth grader.

Kieran's Dad, Bob,

There is another side to Kieran's life that a lot of people do not know about. In 2012, Bob was diagnosed with ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease — an incurable and progressive condition that destroys the neurons that control movement.

Argeria and Kieran have become caregivers.

Many mornings before school Kieran helps his father bathe, brush his hair and dress. When Bob drives Kieran to school, Kieran shifts the car from park into reverse so Bob can back out of the driveway. After school Kieran often helps with his father's physical therapy — moving his father's arms and legs back and forth as his father lays on the couch.

Kieran is well aware of his father's condition and he understands clearly that his dad may not see him graduate from high school and college. But, Kieran lives one day at a time and is grateful for each day.

If I keep my eyes open I just might discover that heroes are simply ordinary people who live life in an extra-ordinary manner — and they may actually be living next door, or down the street, or be the student who sits next to me in class.

As the school year begins I ask you to keep COS in your prayers and realize that your regular and generous support of COS makes a strong Catholic education possible for many families who other wise could not afford it.

God bless you,

Fr. Steve Adrian, Pastor of Community of Saints



For the past three years, Bob has tutored students at Community of Saints every Thursday.

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The Good News from St. Matthew | Fall 2016



St. Mike's memory from Michael Van Guilder '61: *In the old school, there was no electric system to signal the end of recess, so the nuns had to ring a handbell to let us know when it was time to come in.*

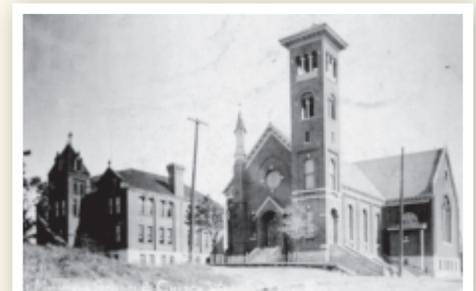
St. Michael's Celebrates 150th Anniversary Sunday, September 25

Everyone is welcome to an all day event that honors St. Michael's 150 years of service to the community.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:30 am | Mass with Archbishop Hebda |
| 11:30 am – 2 pm | Facility tours |
| 3:00 pm | Social hour & silent auction at Our Lady of Guadalupe |
| 4:00 pm | Dinner at Tinucci's Restaurant *\$30 per person |
| 6:00 pm | Presentation |

For more information visit St. Michael's website @ www.stmichaelwsp.org or call the parish center 651-457-2334. Make dinner reservations by September 15.

St. Michael's Church was first established in 1866. The original campus was on Parnell St. on the lower West Side.



Reding Family Marks 40+ Years at St. Matt's & COS

Reflecting on How School Shaped Their Lives

by Amanda Reding '13

Forty-three years ago, I don't believe that my grandparents realized they were making a decision that would impact the lives of their future grandchildren. For them, they were just sending their kids to the neighborhood Catholic school. "In the end, I think sending Mark and Dawn to St. Matthew's was one of the best decisions that we made," my grandpa told me. "It not only gave them a great education, it also gave them the life skills to be able to interact with people from all different walks of life."

My dad, Mark Reding, remembers playing tackle football in the infamous, large, concrete parking lot. It was the same parking lot that 27 years later, his own son would play football on, although by then it was touch and not tackle. My aunt, Dawn Reding said that St. Matthew's taught her how to be comfortable with who she is and be accepting of other people. "The St. Matthew's experience wasn't one that you can get just anywhere. It takes a special kind of place to teach a kid how to accept diversity, and St. Matthew's was that place. It was an experience that I wanted my own children to be able to have."

COS Adds to Traditions

When St. Matthew's announced in 2012 that it would combine with other schools, my family was a little disappointed. It had become our family school, something that we all held close to our hearts. "At



first, we were sad," my grandma told me when I asked her how she originally felt about the merger. "We were also a little worried. We weren't



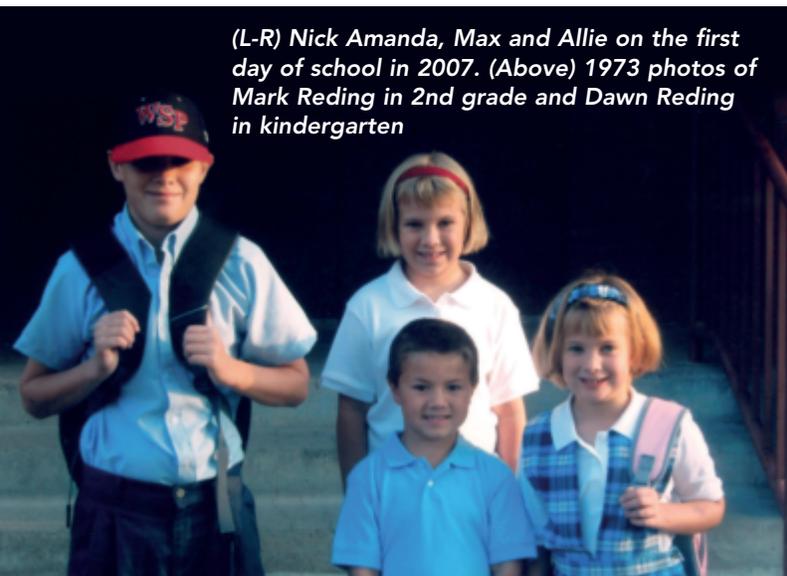
Two generations of Redings have graduated from St. Matthew's & COS. (Left-right) Max Karas '16, Mark Reding '79, Amanda Reding '13, Nick Reding '10, Dawn Reding '81, Allie Reding '15, Melissa Lopez '06

sure if this new school would carry on the mission that we so loved about St. Matthew's. But as the year went on, we could really see this new school starting to take shape and the mission wasn't lost at all. In fact, it was as though it had been reincarnated for a whole new generation."

For those of us who continued on at COS, it definitely took some time to get used to. For myself, it was especially hard. The first year of the merger was my 8th grade year and I was afraid that I'd lose the traditions that had been carried on at St. Matthew's for so long. In the end though, COS prepared me for life in ways I had no idea it would. It taught me how to be a better leader as well as how to better accept change. COS has also started a few new traditions of its own. One tradition is the musical that the 8th graders now put on every year. For my cousin Max, this was one of his favorite memories. He loved being able to see his class create something together and then being able to perform it in front of everyone.

Overall, both St. Matthew's and COS are places that hold a lot of meaning and memory for my family. It's a place in which my father, aunt, cousin and brother all walked before me, and a place my sister and cousin walked after me. It's a place where we hope many other families are able to make their own memories like the ones we've made over the last 40+ years.

(L-R) Nick Amanda, Max and Allie on the first day of school in 2007. (Above) 1973 photos of Mark Reding in 2nd grade and Dawn Reding in kindergarten



The Catholic School Advantage at COS

What is the Catholic School Advantage?*

Higher academic achievement for students in Catholic and other private schools compared to students of similar background attending public schools.

Higher graduation rates from high school and college for Latino and African American students who attend Catholic schools compared to their public school peers.

Significantly reduced social class effects on educational achievement for students in Catholic schools.

Greater achievement gains correlate directly to the poorer and more at risk students attending Catholic schools.

Catholic schools produce graduates who tend towards more civic engagement, who are more tolerant, and more committed to service as adults.

*University of Notre Dame, 'To Nurture the Soul of a Nation' Alliance for Catholic Education.



At Community of Saints Diversity is a Given

COS welcomes students from a wide range of cultures

67%
are Latino

24%
are White

9%
are African American,
Native American & Asian





Building a Foundation of Faith

Through daily religion classes, weekly school Mass and regular opportunities to serve others in the community, COS works to impart the essential message of our faith as it prepares the next generation of Catholics.



COS Supports Families in Need

63% of students attending COS qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch. That is one of the highest rates in the Archdiocese.

92% of students receive tuition assistance funded by A&F&F.



24% of COS Students are English Language Learners

English Language Learner is a student who lives in a home where someone speaks a language other than English.

COS has the highest percentage of such students in the St. Paul Catholic schools.

Students may be fluent in English but typically require additional support to acquire strong literacy skills.

COS has developed an exceptionally strong program to help these students achieve.



A School Culture that Respects and Welcomes All

Teachers at COS receive cultural proficiency training to facilitate success working in a cross cultural environment.

“We want students to have an experience where they feel love for who they are and are taught skills for how to adapt to different cultures while still being themselves.”

– Principal Bridget Kramer



Continued from page 1

was doing volunteer work and playing on two different sports teams,” Frances adds proudly.

Aleah is the first in her family to attend a college preparatory high school. “It’s a big deal if Aleah goes to college,” Frances pointed out. “Just for her to graduate high school is big in our family.”

In addition to good grades, the Flaherty Scholarship seeks out students who’ve demonstrated determination and are motivated by the opportunity to achieve more. Students are required to submit a five-page essay explaining their goals for high school. “I think what they liked about my essay was that I know what I want to do, said Aleah. “But if that doesn’t work out, I have another plan.”

Aleah loves volleyball and basketball and says she can imagine having a career in athletics. But she can also see pursuing a career as a writer, which she also loves.

Aleah’s mom, Angela, is clearly proud of her daughter and is thankful for the support she’s received from the COS community. When Aleah first enrolled at COS, Angela was unemployed but serving as a caregiver for another family member. Even with her mother’s help, tuition at COS was unaffordable. “But at COS, they don’t turn people away,” Angela said. “Any type of situation you’re in, they’re there for the community. They reach out to each and every person.”



“The path I want to take requires a lot of hard work and studying.” Isaac with his mother, Priscila Enriquez.

Flaherty Scholar Isaac Enriquez ‘16

Isaac Enriquez and COS principal Bridget Kramer agreed that 8th grade marked a change in Isaac’s approach to school. “Seventh grade was a rough year for Isaac for a lot of reasons,” said Ms. Kramer. “But in 8th grade he came ready to go and was super motivated.”

Isaac agrees. “I’m no genius, but I developed a mindset of wanting to learn,” he explained. “I see a lot of people who are poor and not well educated. I didn’t want that for me. So I switched my mindset, really paid attention, did all the homework and turned in assignments.” Isaac’s goal was to maintain a B average but he surpassed that by earning all As.

Isaac’s parents are from Mexico but he was born in the Quebec province of Canada and moved to St. Paul when he was three. His mother sent Isaac

to COS for middle school to learn more about his Catholic faith. Isaac’s mother speaks limited English and she relies on Isaac to help translate for her.

Through Isaac, she explained that at school conferences, she was always impressed at how hard the school staff works to help students succeed.

Ms. Kramer observes that Isaac is an active young man who has become a disciplined student.

“He’s very intelligent and is fluent in English, Spanish and French,” said

Ms. Kramer. “He trains as a boxer, which is very demanding, and he can get along with anyone.” In addition to the Flaherty Scholarship, Isaac was chosen to receive the Skipper Slawik Scholarship, another four-year award.”

When Isaac told Ms. Kramer he’d won the Flaherty Scholarship, he shook his head in disbelief. He knows he’ll need to work hard to earn good grades at Cretin-Derham Hall High School, and he’s already looking ahead to college. He is interested in both astrophysics and psychology, but also plans to take classes in business. “If one thing doesn’t work out, I can look to the other,” Isaac explained. “But I will always have high expectations for myself.”

“Receiving a scholarship like this is incredibly important to our students,” said Ms. Kramer. “It tells them that people out there believe in them and that they deserve to go to these schools even if they can’t afford it on their own. That’s a real gift.”

“Receiving a scholarship like this tells them they deserve to go to these schools even if they can’t afford it on their own.”

— Principal Bridget Kramer

We're Up For a Challenge – How About You?

Help Us Raise \$65,000 by Sept. 30 to Earn Another \$65,000

100% Goes for Tuition Assistance at COS

The Schulze Foundation, in partnership with Catholic Schools Center of Excellence (CSCOE) and two anonymous donors have joined forces to issue the latest challenge. Alums & Friends & Families has until September 30th to raise \$65,000 in order to receive an additional \$65,000 for tuition assistance.

All of the money raised by A&F&F provides tuition assistance for students attending Community of Saints. Over 90% of students enrolled receive some form of assistance. That means your contribution plays a critical role in making sure that Catholic education in this community remains available to families of all income levels.

If you have questions about the challenge, call Doug Lieser at 651-457-2510 X119.

To donate now, please make your check payable to A&F&F. You can use the enclosed envelope or mail it into A&F&F, PO Box 7005, St. Paul, MN 55107.

Online donations can be made at www.CommunityofSaints.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

CSCOE Becomes Strong Partner in Support of Catholic Education

Last year, several high profile Twin Cities foundations joined forces in an effort to support Catholic education in the archdiocese. The Schulze Family Foundation, the Catholic Community Foundation, the Aim Higher Foundation and the GHR Foundation, have all come together to create Catholic Schools Center of Excellence, or CSCOE for short (pronounced Sis-coe.) The mission of the new non-profit is to support excellence in Catholic education and increase Catholic school enrollment in the Archdiocese.

"These are very important foundations and they have made a deliberate choice to support Catholic schools," explained Fr. Steve Adrian. "In doing so, they are really buying into A&F&F's mission of making sure Catholic education is available and affordable to all families in our community."

As CSCOE celebrates its one-year anniversary, president Gail Dorn is excited about the mission. "We are happy to partner with schools and invest in them to help maintain their level of excellence and reach more students," said Dorn. "Every child is created uniquely in the image of God and Catholic schools are uniquely qualified to educate the whole child — body, mind and soul."



A&F&F volunteer Mary Jane Ferber '62 with students at COS.

Since 2007, A&F&F has taken the lead in guaranteeing that tuition will not create a barrier to families seeking a Catholic education for their children. Fr. Steve believes that CSCOE now represents a significant opportunity to COS. "These foundations have, in effect, become partners with those of us who are doing the very same work," he said. "They have joined our effort."

\$65,000 Challenge Grant

We've raised **81%**

Amount Raised: \$52,075

We Need: \$12,295
By September 30



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Welcome to our newest group of alums — Community of Saint's Class of 2016!



Like us on  [Alums&Friends&Families](#)