



**CATHOLIC ACADEMY
ST. ANDREW**

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ST. ANDREW**



**CATHOLIC ACADEMY
OF BRIDGEPORT**

2018-2019 Annual Report

Four campuses, *one mission*

The four campuses of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport provide a Christ-centered, academically rigorous learning environment where cultural diversity is welcomed and celebrated. Students are nurtured, encouraged and challenged in preparation for a successful life of leadership and service.



Welcome Message

As Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport and Chair of the Board of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, we could not be more proud or grateful to share our annual report for the academic year, 2018–2019.

It was a year of firsts for us. We bucked the trend of many inner-city Catholic schools in the United States by not only continuing to exist but continuing to thrive. Despite the uneven economy in Bridgeport and with 65% percent of our students' families living below the poverty level, we distributed the largest amount of financial aid in our history: \$2.1 million to 854 students.

We funded guidance counselors on each of our four campuses, began an intense commitment to Social-Emotional Learning through the generosity of the Tauck Family Foundation, assured sufficient student access to Chromebooks, and broadened our professional development program for all staff through a new MathWorks program as well as an ongoing program with The Southport School to identify children with learning challenges. We revised and strengthened our fundraising events, bringing in 1.6 million for scholarship and an additional \$650,000 for general support, increased our endowment, and passed our 10-year NEASC accreditation with no failed standards. NEASC praised our Academy as “a bright and shining light of hope for the education of children

in Bridgeport,” and this was our sixth consecutive year of balancing our books. Lastly, but most important, we hired a full-time Executive Director, since the position had grown greatly since 2010 when Sr. Joan Magnetti first began. After a national search by Carney Sandoe, we were thrilled that our first choice, Angela Pohlen, joined us on July 1. Gratefully, Sr. Magnetti will remain on as Coordinator of Major Gifts.

You have contributed to our success and we can take courage that our future is bright. With God's grace and your continued support we can do great things for the next generation of students.



THE MOST REVEREND FRANK J. CAGGIANO
BISHOP OF BRIDGEPORT



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Executive Director, Angela Pohlen (center) is joined by Catholic Academy of Bridgeport principals (L-R): Pat Griffin (St. Ann campus), Cheryl Tokarski (St. Augustine campus), Sr. Christine Hoffner (St. Raphael campus), and Gene Holmes (St. Andrew campus) outside of The Country Club of Fairfield at our annual Golf Classic.

Principal's *Letter*

If you're ever having a bad day, we encourage you to come visit one of our campuses; you can't leave without being joyful and hopeful about the future! When you walk our halls and see students solving a conflict using their Social-Emotional Learning tools, you see the next generation of counselors and caregivers be the hearts and hands of Christ to our fellow human beings.

Step into an art room, and you will see the future graphic designers, architects and creatives that bring color and inspiration to the world. Visit a math or science class, and you will see the financiers, engineers, inventors and scientists that will bring solutions to the problems we have yet to decipher. Listen in on the discussions in religion, social studies, and literature classes and get a sneak peek at the philosophers, teachers, policy makers and social activists that will create a more just society. Our schools are where hope takes root.

Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, but they share the universal attributes of childhood: happiness, resiliency, and potential. Every day, we see students have "aha!" moments,

whether academically, socially or spiritually under the tutelage of the best teachers in Bridgeport and beyond. Our faculty continue to develop themselves professionally, and differentiate their instruction to give every child the best opportunity for success. Combine this expertise with strong parent involvement and a safe and nurturing learning environment, and the result is the very best of Catholic education.

We are grateful for your support and partnership in this important work. We hope you will come visit us and see the difference you are helping us to make firsthand! We look forward to continuing to lead our four campuses as one school to serve the children and families of Bridgeport.

Building Upon Success

The joy of a new school year is the opportunity to start fresh with new opportunities to grow while building upon a history of success. Academically in 2018-2019, our students made significant progress with measured improvement in language arts and math.

An analysis of last year's standardized test scores revealed that the longer our students remain with us the stronger they perform, with every class scoring well above national norms across the board. Though children often come to us up to two years below grade level, their time at the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport closes that gap. Our 8th grade placement in area Catholic high schools and some magnet and public schools was among the strongest ever. The Social-Emotional Learning program coupled with our faith development and opportunities for service, encouraged us that we are indeed bringing up a new generation of young women and men living the values of Christ in a very complicated world. In an Academy-wide reflection writing assignment given to the 7th and 8th grade students at the beginning of the year, we were heartened to discover that our students recognize the gifts and advantages that their education at the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport provides. They are bright, eager and hard working students who want to achieve for themselves, their families, and give back to their community. This work makes a difference.

We have an alumni network that is beginning to blossom, and as we get to know the members, we are able to see the tangible effect our work has on each generation. We can be proud of what we've accomplished, but it must motivate us to strive for more. Our goal is to work together to keep this important school thriving in order to impact as many young people as we can. We look forward to partnering with you, to do the same.



SISTER JOAN MAGNETTI, RSCJ
COORDINATOR OF MAJOR GIFTS



ANGELA POHLEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



New Executive Director Angela Pohlen, left, and
Sr. Joan Magnetti



Highlights of the Year



Our students are above the national average in all subject areas in standardized testing.

80%+

More than 80% of our students are performing at grade level versus only 23% of their Bridgeport public school counterparts.



100% of our students graduate from high school compared with only 60% of Bridgeport public school students, plus 99% of those are being accepted into secondary education.



Lauded as a “shining light of hope” for the children of Bridgeport” by NEASC in final accreditation report.



More than \$2 million in scholarships awarded each year.

83%

of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

\$5,000

The cost of annual tuition versus \$7,500 cost to educate one child.

77

Middle School students attended our summer Jump Start program.

19

committed Board Members.

Caring *Beyond the Classroom*

Marie Telfort has much to be proud of. A unit controller at Sodexo, Telfort's three daughters graduated from the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport's St. Augustine campus and went on to terrific success.

Her oldest daughter, Vengie, graduated from Lauralton Hall then received a B.A. from Assumption College and an M.A. from Suffolk University; post-graduation she interned for the European Parliament in Brussels and today works as a digital analyst for CBS. Telfort's middle daughter, Elizabeth, also graduated from Lauralton Hall and received both a B.A. and an M.S. from St. John's University where today she is a graduate assistant. Her youngest daughter, Elisha, is a freshman at Sacred Heart Hamden, where she is a member of the Key Club and just finished a stellar volleyball season.

But things weren't always so happy and bright for Telfort and her daughters.

DEALING WITH HARDSHIP & LOSS

Originally from Haiti and one of seven children, Telfort grew up in a household where a high value was placed on Catholic education. So naturally, when she moved to the U.S. in 1998, she sought out a Catholic school for her girls and was thrilled to find St. Augustine. "It's very family-oriented. Everyone knows everyone.

Teachers always have time for your kids after school, they have a social worker in the school and there are small class sizes. And number one, it was always a safe environment."

But in 2011, the family experienced hardship, including the loss of both of Telfort's parents. "I had a lot of tragedy in Haiti then went through some personal tragedy in Bridgeport. Despite working, my financial situation was falling apart. With one daughter in Lauralton Hall and two in St. Augustine, I started wondering if I should tell my children they would be unable to graduate from the schools they were in."

Telfort decided to call Ann Marie Donnelly, an 8th grade teacher at St. Augustine whom she trusted and respected. "Mrs. Donnelly said, 'Don't tell the girls they won't be able to graduate.' She told me to make an appointment with the principal, social worker and financial person. That was the best advice because when I called, they stepped up to help us. They didn't let money be an obstacle to a good education. I will never forget that."



Sisters Elizabeth, Elisha and Evangelica "Vengie" Telfort

And praise for the school extends further. "When my oldest went on to high school, her English teacher there asked me to make sure I told her 8th grade English teacher at St. Augustine that she did a really good job," shared Telfort.

A THANKFUL SPIRIT

When Elisha graduated last June, the family decided to show their gratitude for one teacher that all three Telfort children had: Mrs. Donnelly. "The girls called it a 'Legacy Award' and it was a very special surprise. But it was also a little embarrassing because it's all of the teachers that prepare these students for high school, not just me," said Donnelly.

The Telfort family is just one of hundreds of families who received needs-based assistance last year, totaling more than \$2 million. Telfort said that if it wasn't for the generosity of donors who make such aid possible, she doesn't know how her daughters' lives would have turned out.



Marie and Elisha Telfort
with Ann Marie Donnelly

Financial Summary



Ordinary Income/Expense

July 2018 to June 2019

INCOME

● Family Tuitions	\$2,243,268
● Contributions for Scholarships and Board Fundraising Activities	\$3,273,510
● Contributions from the Diocese and through Annual Catholic Appeal	\$537,334
● Endowment Distribution to Operating	\$340,000
● Other Auxiliary Revenue	\$645,037

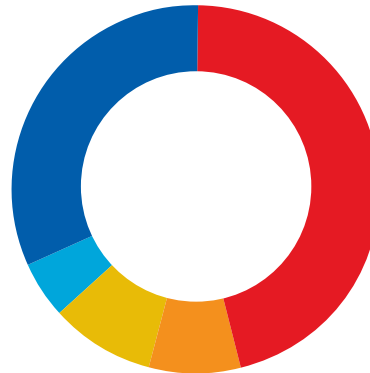
TOTAL INCOME \$7,039,149

EXPENSES

● Compensation and Benefits	\$4,996,737
● Other Expenses	\$2,010,910

TOTAL EXPENSES \$7,007,647

NET ORDINARY INCOME \$31,502



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your support!



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