







## 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 are pleased to share with you our Annual Report for the 2019–2020 academic year.

Our Academy had the privilege of educating 850 students last year. We are extremely proud of the accomplishments of each of them, especially the 90 boys and girls who graduated in June, many of whom were accepted to some of the best private high schools in Fairfield County.

Outside of the classroom, there was much to be proud of as well. We continued to move forward with many aspects of our strategic plan and despite a challenging year, we remained financially secure thanks to the generosity of people like you. Our Board of Directors became more diverse and we are happy to have two alumni as new members.

What started as a typical year, though, ended very differently due to the hardships presented by COVID-19. The number of families requesting financial aid grew from 85% to 90%. We also saw an increase in families already receiving need-based financial aid requesting additional help when the reality of job losses, food insecurity, a serious illness, and/or other challenges presented themselves. Our families did not hesitate to reach out to us for they recognized the value of

maintaining a Catholic education, especially in a time of crisis. We were glad to be able to provide \$2.1 million in scholarship aid to meet these needs. In addition, when we seamlessly and immediately transitioned to online Distance Learning in March—while many local schools were unable to do so—we also helped families by loaning them devices, helping with connectivity, and providing social-emotional support and groceries.

To those who supported us, thank you. Your investment in our school and in the lives of so many worthy children is beyond measure. You are making a real and significant difference in an extremely challenging environment. God bless.



THE MOST REVEREND FRANK J. CAGGIANO  
BISHOP OF BRIDGEPORT



BRADFORD EVANS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



## Our Board of Directors

Bradford Evans, *Board Chair*  
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Henry Rondon  
Marylou Queally Salvati  
Sergio Toni

## Our Board of Members

Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano  
Msgr. Thomas Powers  
Dr. Steven Cheeseman





Executive Director Angela Pohlen

## *Rising* to the Challenge

If we have a perfect vision for 2020, it's that we will define our best selves in adversity. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have demonstrated that a mission lived with fidelity can overcome even the greatest of obstacles.

Last spring, we executed a seamless transition to Distance Learning in which we consistently engaged 90% of our students and were able to faithfully complete the curriculum for that year. The relationships we forge with our students and families allowed us to help troubleshoot potential roadblocks to success. We loaned out hundreds of Chromebooks, purchased mobile hotspots, provided tech resources, and even distributed over \$8,500 in grocery gift cards for families experiencing food insecurity. The generosity of our friends and donors has never been more acutely needed and directly impactful.

We spent a summer preparing for a safe return to in-person learning, as we know that students learn best in a room with their teachers and peers. Family and faculty Zoom meetings allowed us to gather input from our stakeholders on how best to put them at ease. We believe this contributed to the fact that despite this pandemic, we experienced the least teacher turnover in recent history. Our entire community has stepped up to create a cooperative and productive environment

for our staff to work comfortably and for our students to thrive. In the midst of all of this, we hired two new phenomenal principals, worked to expand and diversify our Board of Directors, and produced numerous webinars for prospective and current families on topics ranging from the path to college for first-generation students, to budgeting for a Catholic education, to our wonderful Hometown Hero series featuring successful young alumni. No pandemic was going to keep us down!

I wish to thank all of you for your prayers and support over this last year. I hope that as you review this Annual Report, you will be proud of the impact you help us to make in the lives of nearly 850 children and their families. It is a privilege to share this mission with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Pohlen". The script is fluid and cursive.

ANGELA POHLEN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# Principals' *Letter*

Hope is embodied in the resilience of children, and never has that been more evident than this year. From the spring when we had to close our doors and begin our highly effective and successful Distance Learning program, to this fall when we safely and carefully resumed in-person learning, the one thing that didn't change was the joy our children both emit and evoke.

We've made a lot of physical changes to our buildings, students and teachers are faithfully wearing their masks at all times, and there are signs abounding reminding all to wash hands. However, as one observer noted, "If you were to close your eyes, you'd never know anything was different for all the laughter and learning you hear."

If our children are able to be their regular joyful selves, we must also credit the parents and teachers who have created such a united front of confidence and care for them. Our teachers overwhelmingly could not wait to get back into the classrooms and teach the way they know best. The process to get ourselves here has been an enormous collaboration with a common thread of flexibility, understanding, and cooperation at its heart. Last year, our students successfully completed the curricula and we graduated 90 students in ceremonies that ranged from a faculty car parade that visited each home, to a socially distanced

parking lot ceremony, to an outdoor Mass. Our families continue to be our strength and our inspiration, as they supported our efforts unwaveringly and provided input that was vital to creating memorable experiences for all.

We transitioned to Distance Learning over the Thanksgiving holiday per Department of Health suggestions, to stem the rising cases of COVID in our area. The more than 11 weeks of successful in-person learning that we enjoyed helped us to prepare well for this transition which was systematic, carefully executed and, we hope, brief. No matter what comes our way, we will continue to provide our students and families with *something more*.

Thank you for your support and partnership in this important work. We hope that when it's safe to do so, you will come visit us, and see the difference you're helping us to make firsthand!



Catholic Academy of Bridgeport principals (L-R, clockwise) Mrs. Patricia A. Griffin, St. Ann; Mr. Gene Holmes, St. Andrew, Sr. Marialice Ackermann, ASCJ, St. Raphael, Dr. Allison Hurtt, St. Augustine



# Fundraising *Hits the Mark!*

Despite a global pandemic, we still met our fundraising goal for the 2019–2020 school year because of faithful donors, friends and foundations. Everyone at the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport—from our students, to our faculty, to our Board—is grateful beyond words.

We kicked off the 2019–2020 academic year with an intimate Fall Dinner at Polpo in Greenwich where 55 people gathered and we raised more than \$300,000. Then, despite state-mandated quarantines and closures just days before our Roaring 20's spring gala, an extremely generous donor offered to match all online gifts within a 48-hour window and, when added to pre-event donations, we were able to raise an incredible \$350,000 for this single event. Add to that monies received prior to our “rain-delayed” Golf Classic,

and we clearly met our fundraising goal. And beyond that, we also expanded awareness of our dynamic school and even re-engaged several lapsed donors. Because of your generosity, the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport has operated at break-even since 2013. In fact, in the 2019–2020 school year we raised \$3.5 million alone from donors. We are so grateful to everyone who has stood by us and showed their deep commitment to the children entrusted to our care.

## THIS YEAR WE PROUDLY RECOGNIZE:



90

**Eighth Graders**

graduated and were well prepared for high school



5%

**Teacher Turnover,**

our lowest rate in history, despite faculty salaries being notably lower than those of public schools



100s  
of Donors

faithfully walked alongside us and we acknowledge and applaud them



1:1

**Student Chromebooks**

bridged the gap during Distance Learning, plus we purchased hot spots, groceries, and grocery store gift cards for families hit hard by illness, job loss or the death of a breadwinner during COVID-19



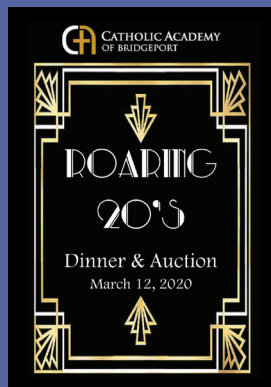
# Highlights of the Year



**TOP LEFT** Ron Rosa (center) is publicly thanked by Jim Bailey and Sr. Joan Magnetti during the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport's Annual Fall Dinner at Polpo, an event Rosa has generously underwritten for many years.

**TOP RIGHT AND ABOVE** Foursomes sold out quickly for this year's Golf Classic as golfers were anxious to get out from under pandemic restrictions, enjoy fresh air and friendship, and raise money for a fabulous cause—all while masked and socially distanced.

**AT RIGHT** Despite the cancellation of our Roaring 20's gala only a few days before the scheduled event, due to Covid-19, we met our fundraising goal thanks to donations sent in advance and a very generous matching gift.



## Tremendous women leave legacies of love



AT LEFT Kathy & Jim Colica are joined by student speaker Jose Dataram at our 2018 Annual Fall Dinner at Polpo. AT RIGHT Cokie Roberts with Bishop Frank Caggiano at our 2018 Ladies Luncheon, where Cokie was the guest speaker.

### Katherine "Kathy" Hanson

JUNE 21, 1953–JANUARY 31, 2020

Those who had the privilege of knowing Kathy, remember a warm, gentle spirit with a sparkling smile and an enormous desire to help those in need. It is no surprise, then, that Kathy and her husband, Jim Colica, sponsored the scholarships of 10 students at our Academy for many years—something Jim still does today. Kathy eagerly awaited report cards and correspondence from these children and had always hoped to meet them one day. Jim will be dedicating a new playground on our St. Augustine campus to honor Kathy. How wonderful to know the love and commitment she had for our students will continue on through this gift into eternity.

### Corinne "Cokie" Roberts

DECEMBER 27, 1943–SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

Whether you remember Cokie as a trailblazer for women journalists who covered American politics for decades, an award-winning broadcaster who won three Emmys, or a best-selling author of historical non-fiction, we remember Cokie as a stalwart friend and donor. Cokie supported every single special event or fundraiser our Academy has ever had since 2011. She also was generous of her time, enthusiastically agreeing to be the guest speaker at our Ladies Luncheon in 2018. Her intellect, wit, and kind heart will be greatly missed.





## Pathway to *Success*

When fraternal twins Brandon and Brianna Henry transferred to Catholic Academy of Bridgeport's St. Ann campus four years ago, their mother, Shelly-Ann, thought they were reading at the top of their class—at least that is what the teacher at the charter school they were coming from had told her.

Yet when Pat Griffin, principal of the Academy's St. Ann campus, tested them, Henry learned her children were actually reading two years below grade level, and that each child had separate language-based disabilities that greatly affected their reading, writing and math.

Griffin suggested the children stay back a year, and she arranged for someone from the Bridgeport Special Ed Department to come and provide services to Brandon and Brianna right at St. Ann.

"At St. Ann, my children got accommodation plans . . . things like extra time on tests, seeing work before they saw it in the classroom, and extra help with writing and vocabulary. They even got help from a speech pathologist," says Henry.

Today Brandon and Brianna are in the 7th grade at St. Ann and thriving. Brianna no longer needs the level of special services she once received while Brandon still receives the supports he needs.

"I can't say how much we love St. Ann," says Henry. "My kids have been very successful here." Yet without financial help, Henry says this would never be possible. "Last year, my husband had some medical issues and I had to give up my job to help him. The school really picked up and helped with tuition. And when they moved to online learning, the school gave my kids Chromebooks and called all the time to make sure everything was going okay. This is more than a school. This is a family."





## A Family Affair

More than 20 years ago, when her oldest daughter, Brianna, was ready to enter Kindergarten, Shannon Salicrup heard about the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport's St. Andrew campus. While she had never considered the school before, she heard many positive things about it, so she thought she would give it a try.

"Everyone at St. Andrew was so happy. I kept hearing about many fights in the public schools and there were just many more children there. But St. Andrew, compared to that, was a night and day difference."

Not only did Brianna end up happily attending St. Andrew, so did her three younger siblings: Savannah, Jake and Leanna. In fact, today Leanna is a 7th grader at the school.

Salicrup says she has been grateful for the academic and other support her children have received through the years. "The school is totally on my side. If they see my kids slipping, they contact me. Everybody knows my children. Teachers make it fun to learn, and kids feel loved. I give credit to the school for all of my children's successes."

And those successes are many. After graduating from St. Andrew, Brianna went on to Notre Dame High School, then on to college, and today she is a nurse at St. Vincent's Hospital; Savannah is a senior at Kolbe [Cathedral High School] where she is in the Honors Program and in the top 20% of her class; and Jake is a freshman at Kolbe."

Salicrup, today a single mother, says financial assistance has made all the difference in giving her children the opportunity to receive a private, Catholic school education at Catholic Academy of Bridgeport. "I wouldn't be able to do it without the help," she explains. "The Academy has been amazingly supportive of me. I just love this school."



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# Financial Summary

January



April



May



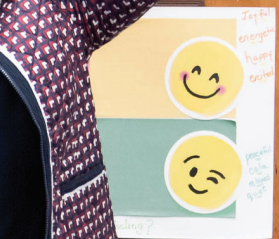
June



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



THROW  
KINDNESS  
ROUND L  
CONFET



- ter  
Come to school w  
How → -walking feet  
- helping hands/hands  
- listening ears  
- Quiet mouths  
- Looking eyes  
ed → How → -P  
- Say Hello  
- Use manners  
- Give compliments

Abc



## Ordinary Income/Expense

### *July 2019 to June 2020*

#### INCOME

● Family Tuitions	\$2,148,062
● Contributions for Scholarships and Fundraising Activities	\$2,618,254
● Contributions from the Diocese through Annual Catholic Appeal	\$504,143
● Other Contributions	\$349,176
● Endowment Distribution to Operating	\$480,000

**TOTAL INCOME** **\$6,099,635**

#### EXPENSES

● Compensation and Benefits	\$5,023,448
● Other Ordinary Expenses	\$1,321,920

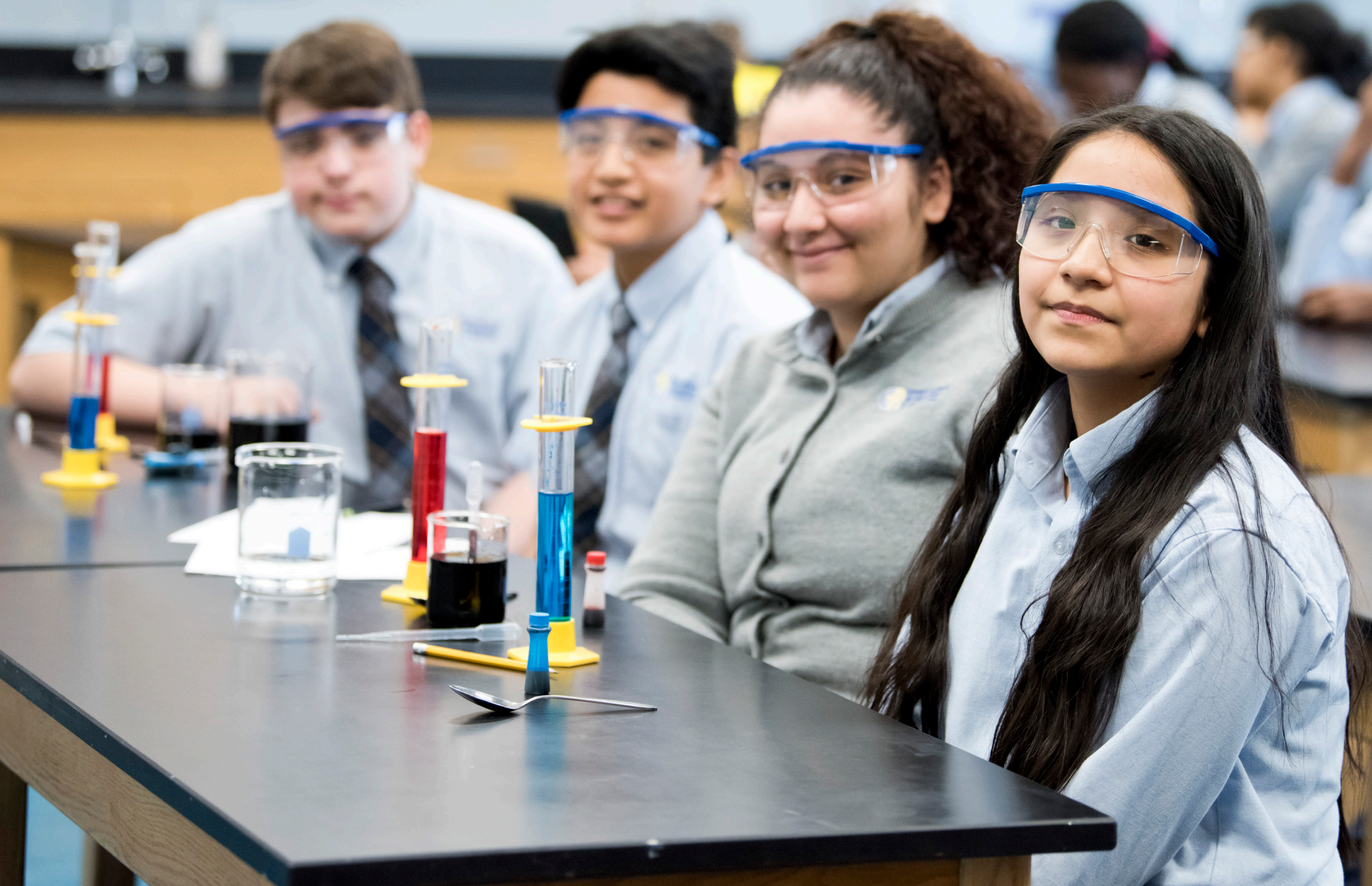
**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$6,345,368**

**NET INCOME (LOSS)** **(\$245,733)**





## Our Donors





## Gifts by Amount

### \$50,000 AND OVER

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**MAIL** Catholic Academy of Bridgeport  
63 Pequonnock Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

**TO WIRE STOCK** Instruct your broker to "deliver free" to:

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Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocesan Corp  
Account Number: WPU-086780

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Thank you for considering a gift to our Academy.





# Why I Give

*to Catholic Academy of Bridgeport*

## JOHN KREITLER

**Strategic Advisor, *GraniteRidge Asset Management***

**Board member, *Catholic Academy of Bridgeport***

**Senior Warden, *Trinity Church Southport***

**Former Board & Executive Committee Member,  
*Council of Churches Greater Bridgeport***

**Husband to Heather; father to Jack, Henry,  
Charlotte & Annabelle**

"I am attracted to the work and mission of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport for many reasons. I have long admired the effectiveness of religiously affiliated schools and nonprofits, especially within neighborhoods and cities where public services regularly produce lesser outcomes. One of the Academy's enduring strengths is that it educates the entirety of the individual through its values-based curriculum, and it does so at an extremely high academic level. Amazingly, the Academy accomplishes this at less than half the expense incurred by charter, private and public schools per pupil, with zero government assistance and better outcomes. Most importantly, the commitment of the Academy's donors and the generosity of its scholarship program allow the average Academy parent to pay a fraction of the already reduced cost of their child's education. I greatly admire the Academy's highly talented staff who have the deep commitment to produce these results across its four campuses on a large scale. I am thankful to be a part of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, and to work alongside its staff, its Board of Directors and all of its generous contributors who greatly affect the lives and futures of each one of our K through 8th grade students and their families, every single day."





EXECUTIVE OFFICES  
63 Pequonnock Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Thank you for  
your support!

[catholicacademybridgeport.org](http://catholicacademybridgeport.org)

