PARTNERS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION JOIN FORCES TO LAUNCH PREMIERE SCHOLARSHIP GALA


The Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Office of Catholic Education (OCE), Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools (BLOCS), Faith in the Future (FIF), and Independence Mission Schools (IMS) proudly announce the premiere BLOCS Gala for Catholic Education.

Throughout the course of every year, these organizations work to support current and prospective families seeking to provide their children with the lifelong benefits of a Catholic education at one of 104 parish and regional elementary schools, 17 Archdiocesan high schools, four Archdiocesan Schools of Special Education, and 15 Independence Mission Schools.

This collaboration of key partners in Catholic education in the five-county Archdiocese seeks to celebrate the gift of Catholic education, highlight its mission, and raise new scholarship funds to assist families in need.

The BLOCS Gala for Catholic Education will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2017 at the SugarHouse Event Center. As part of the program, J. Mark Baiada, Founder and President of BAYADA Home Health Care, and his wife, retired Director Ann Baiada, will be recognized with the 2017 Distinguished Graduate Award. Mr. Baiada is a proud graduate of Saint Peter School in Riverside, New Jersey, and Holy Cross High School in Delran, New Jersey. Mrs. Baiada is a proud graduate of Immaculate Conception School in the Germantown section of Philadelphia and Cardinal Dougherty High School in the Northeast section of Philadelphia.

Festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. The emcee will be Mr. Bob Kelly, Traffic Anchor for Fox 29 & Good Day Philadelphia. Mr. Kelly is a Catholic school alumnus who graduated from All Saints Elementary School in the Bridesburg section of Philadelphia and Northeast Catholic High School for Boys in the Northeast section of Philadelphia.

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Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.; Bishop Michael J. Fitzgerald, the Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia who oversees Catholic education; Mr. Don Saleski, Board Chairman, BLOCS; Mr. H. Edward Hanway, Board Chairman, FIF; and Mr. Brian McElwee, Board Chairman, IMS; will be in attendance to represent the sponsoring entities. Archbishop Chaput and Bishop Fitzgerald will lead guests in the opening and closing prayers, respectively.

Archbishop Chaput said, “I look forward to attending the BLOCS Gala for Catholic Education this year. It promises to be an enjoyable evening filled with opportunities to learn about the value of Catholic education, support its mission, and recognize exemplary graduates. I’m grateful to the leadership of the Office of Catholic Education, Faith in the Future, BLOCS, and the Independence Mission Schools for making this event possible.

The elementary, secondary, and special education schools in our Archdiocese provide the lifelong gift of a quality education centered on the model of Christ. They form future leaders who will be poised to succeed and to serve in their communities. It would not be possible for these schools to provide educational and technological resources or financial aid without the generous support of those who believe Catholic education is a sound investment—and it is. Please consider joining me and helping to provide a bright future for our young people.”

Net proceeds raised from the gala will allow OCE, BLOCS, FIF and IMS to augment existing financial aid and scholarship opportunity programs, enhance curriculum in the arts, sciences, and technology and provide equipment and materials to support students attending the four Archdiocesan Schools of Special Education.

Mr. J. Mark Baiada, Founder and President of BAYADA Home Health Care, and his wife, retired Director Ann Baiada said, “We passionately support a values-based, Catholic education as a way to engage young minds and build character that will lead to being productive citizens. Through these wonderful organizations, children have the opportunity to access a high-quality education and learn good judgment and perspective. We are forever grateful for the foundation we received from a solid Catholic education and a dedication to service.”

Guests will be greeted by students from Archdiocesan and Independence Mission Schools showcasing their talents in a series of vignettes. The evening will also feature student performances as well as personal testimonials from current and past scholarship recipients regarding the positive impact Catholic education has made in their lives.

For further information regarding the BLOCS Gala for Catholic Education, to purchase tickets, or to make a donation, interested parties can visit http://blocs.org/gala/.

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