

# QUARTERLY INVESTORS' REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2013



**Most Holy Trinity Academy**



**St. Louis the King School  
at the Cathedral**



**St. Cecilia Academy**

## College Preparation: The Mission Continues



As ACCESS Academies begins its ninth academic year, we are pleased to report progress in all areas:

- 97 percent of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates in 2013 were accepted to college-prep high schools.
- 98 percent of our 2009 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates completed high school on time.
- 83 percent of our high school seniors were accepted to college.

Our graduates' college acceptance rate is particularly noteworthy because college preparation is our ultimate goal. This *Quarterly Investors' Report* details the incredible dedication and commitment driving ACCESS achievements:

- How ACCESS has energized an ACCESS graduate who is the first in his family to attend college;
- How ACCESS supports educators seeking to build upon their students' success; and
- How our students benefit from the generosity of donors.

This year, more than 300 students in grades 6 through 12 are being served by ACCESS. Many are just beginning their journey at Most Holy Trinity Academy, St. Cecilia Academy and St. Louis the King School at the Cathedral. Those in grades 9 through 12 are tapping our Graduate Support Program to navigate the rigors of their college-prep high schools. All of our students deeply appreciate the donors who support the ACCESS program.

We applaud our students for accepting the challenges of extended school days and longer school years. Those now enrolled in college-prep high schools accept four more years of dedicated studies. We are gratified to witness how ACCESS has helped mold young men and women determined to succeed and contribute.

None of this is possible without our critical partners. These include:

- Our three Archdiocese of St. Louis elementary schools, where the ACCESS program instills responsibility and good study habits;
- The administrators, graduate support directors, and teachers who extend the college-prep vision to the earliest grade levels in their schools; and
- The more than 20 college-prep high schools preparing our students for college.

You are a critical partner as well. Your gifts make our seven-year commitment to each student possible. Today, parents can enroll a child in kindergarten at one of our schools, knowing there is a vision and plan in place for that young student to graduate from college.

Thank you for opening the world to our students by your continued support!

Blake Youde, Executive Director

## ACCESS Keeps Pace with Educational Trends



*Don Cherry, Anthony Lemons and Jessica Kilmade, Most Holy Trinity Academy, discuss changes to their extended day program.*

To help educators meet the changing needs of students preparing for college-prep high schools, ACCESS Academies recently sponsored its first professional development retreat on July 31 and Aug. 1, 2013 at Cedar Creek Conference Center in New Haven, Mo. More than 15 educators participated in an illuminating discussion of ideas and insights for best preparing ACCESS students for educational success.

"We examined what we are doing well and what we can do to better prepare our students for a college-preparatory high school education," said Blake Youde, executive director of ACCESS.

The discussion was facilitated by Youde and Maureen DePriest, director of mission schools and special projects for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Participants focused on adapting programs to current trends with expanded emphasis on:

- Reading non-fiction and helping students analyze content and apply technical writing skills;

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## Access Keeps Pace with Educational Trends *Continued*

- Improving social development skills;
- Developing better study skills, organizational practices and time management habits; and
- Creating better strategies to involve parents in their child's high school education.

Participants included representatives of Cardinal Ritter College Prep, Notre Dame High School, St. John Vianney High School and St. Mary's High School as well as principals, teachers and graduate support directors at the three ACCESS Academies schools: Most Holy Trinity Academy, St. Cecilia Academy and St. Louis the King School at the Cathedral.

## NativityMiguel Scholarship Dinner Raises More than \$560,000



*Students proudly display their chosen high schools by t-shirts worn at the NativityMiguel scholarship fundraiser.*

At this very moment, the gift of a top quality education is propelling more than 300 NativityMiguel students at St. Louis area college-prep high schools. The gift was granted by nearly 500 supporters who gathered to donate more than \$560,000 at the annual NativityMiguel Scholarship Fund Dinner, held June 5, 2013, at the Chase Park Plaza.

"This is an incredible testament to NativityMiguel supporters who believe that education is the key to unlocking the potential in every student to succeed in life," said Blake Youde, executive director of ACCESS Academies. The dinner raised \$130,000 more than the previous year.

Flanked on stage by more than 70 NativityMiguel students, Brandon Ramsey charmed dinner guests with his own success story. Donors' gifts helped him graduate from Trinity Catholic High School. This fall, Ramsey is attending the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

"Students, staff and supporters of NativityMiguel truly deserve accolades," Youde said. "Nationally, only six percent of African-American students and four percent of Hispanic students go on to private, independent college-prep high schools, compared to 97 percent for our Nativity Miguel graduates."

The NativityMiguel Scholarship Dinner, sponsored by ACCESS Academies and the Vatterott Foundation, provides high school tuition scholarships for graduates of ACCESS Academies NativityMiguel schools, including Most Holy Trinity Academy, St. Cecilia Academy, St. Louis the King School at the Cathedral and King of Glory Lutheran School, plus three independent NativityMiguel schools – De La Salle Middle School, Loyola Academy and Marian Middle School.

*"As I look toward the future,  
I know the education I have  
received will prepare me for the  
challenges of college."*

BRANDON RAMSEY, 2009 Most Holy Trinity  
and 2013 Trinity Catholic High School  
graduate

## A Guardian Angel for Terrence Gambrell



As Terrence Gambrell moves from class to class this fall at McKendree University in Lebanon, Ill., the devotion of a loving aunt travels with him. Debra Gambrell served as guardian to Terrence until her death in November 2012. Her dedication to her nephew's success represents the significant role family involvement plays in the success of ACCESS students.

The oldest of six children, Terrence was attending the ACCESS Academies middle school program at Most Holy Trinity Academy in North St. Louis when his Aunt Debra became guardian for Terrence and two of his brothers. Having already raised three children, Ms. Gambrell embraced the ACCESS program and its goal of placing Terrence in a college-prep school. He graduated in May from Collinsville Christian Academy (CCA).

Money was scarce, so financial aid available through ACCESS helped Gambrell pay for Terrence's college-prep high school tuition. When Debra's employer reduced her hours, she was most concerned about the future of Terrence's college-prep education. But Anthony Lemons, graduate support director at Most Holy Trinity, and ACCESS Academies were able to secure and offer additional financial aid so Terrence could graduate from CCA. He graduated with a 3.5 grade point average and earned a full basketball scholarship to McKendree University.

Today, Terrence and his brothers are being raised by another aunt and uncle, who have children of their own. He is a hard worker and dedicated to his family. Now he is helping to raise his brothers and cousins. His persistence and hard work have paid off as he is the first in his family to attend college. To Terrence, his Aunt Debra is a very real guardian angel, as are the generous donors who make financial aid possible.



12120 Bridgeton Square Drive  
Bridgeton, Mo. 63044-9960  
314-898-0430  
[www.accessacademies.org](http://www.accessacademies.org)