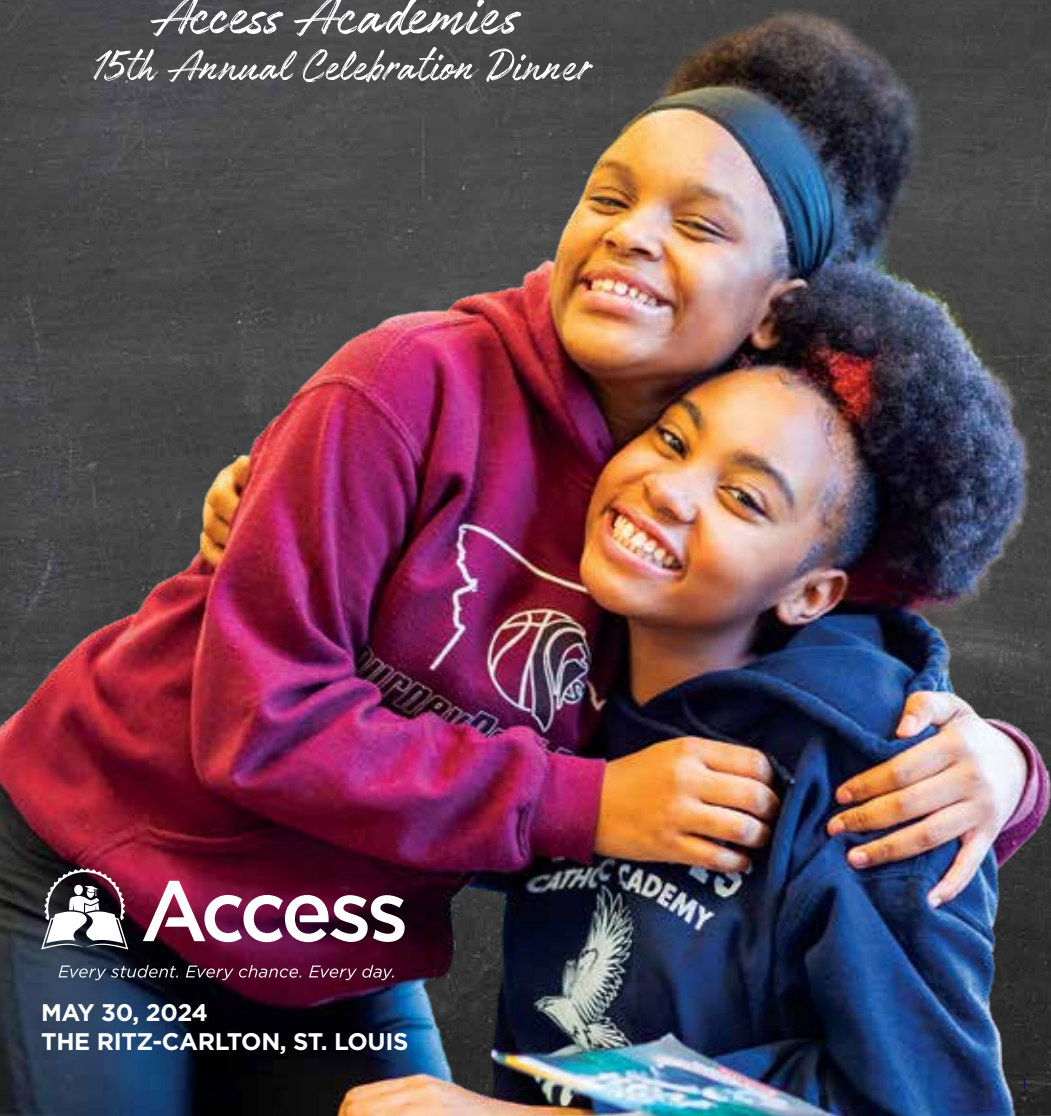


EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

*Access Academies
15th Annual Celebration Dinner*



Access

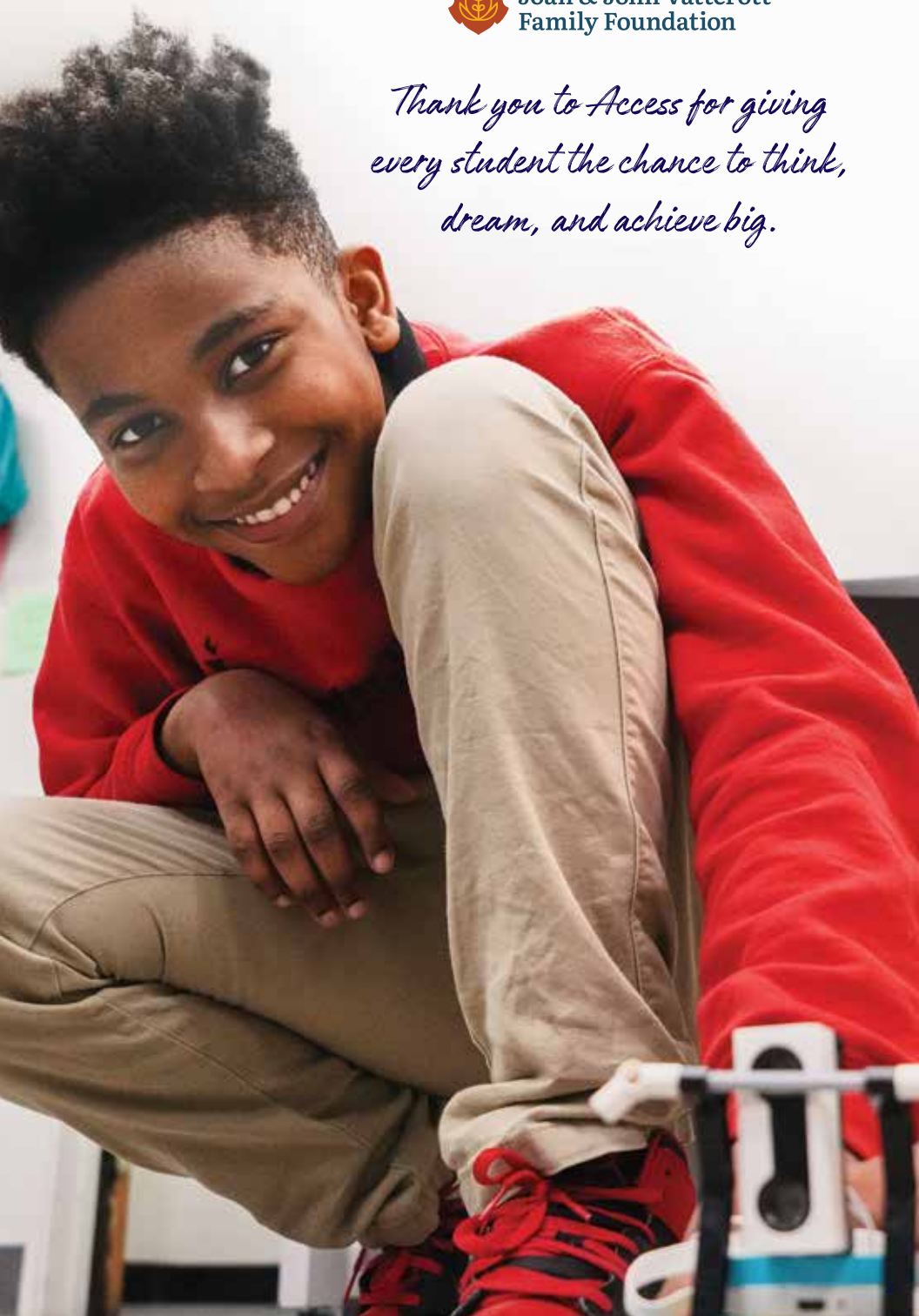
Every student. Every chance. Every day.

**MAY 30, 2024
THE RITZ-CARLTON, ST. LOUIS**



Joan & John Vatterott
Family Foundation

*Thank you to Access for giving
every student the chance to think,
dream, and achieve big.*



- Our Mission -

Access propels middle school students who have been historically underserved through high school and on to college and career success with enrichment, counseling, and scholarships.

- Our Vision -

A vibrant St. Louis community where equity in education allows every child to think, dream, and achieve big.

THIS YEAR, ACCESS ACADEMIES:



Supported **454** students — from middle school through college — with individualized mentoring, guidance, and advocacy.



Guided **40** eighth graders from our three partner middle schools into one of **9** best-fit college-prep high schools.



Funded over **\$724,000** in high school tuition scholarships and registration, technology, and testing fees so that **159** students could attend private, partner high schools.



Organized and led **9** college visits for more than **139** Access eighth graders and high school students.



Awarded **70** collegians the Access College Scholarship — worth up to **\$6,500** per student over their college career. Access has provided over **\$155,000** in college scholarships since 2020.

- Program Schedule -

6:30 PM

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

Alexander Dominguez

St. Cecilia School & Academy 2024

7:30 PM

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Thomas Wheeland, *Board Chair*

Shelly Williams, *Executive Director*

TRIBUTE TO JOHN VATTEROTT AND TERRY MEHAN

Joan Vatterott, *Co-Founder and Supporter*

Marian 'Bo' Mehan, *Chair Emerita and Board Member*

FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

Gwendolyn Fitzpatrick, *Access Parent with Daughters Jada and Jordan Davis*

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School Choir

Directed by Ms. Vera Boldin

ACCESS AND SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY: IMPACT REPORT

Gary W. Ritter, Ph.D.

Professor and Dean, Saint Louis University School of Education

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Mckenzie Renfroe, *Tuskegee University 2027*

Lutheran High School North 2023

Most Holy Trinity Catholic School 2019

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Mentors in Motion

Enrichment Instructor Teff Deezy

ACCESS ACADEMIES PILLAR AWARD

2024 Recipient Mary McGeathy

Presented by Carmelita Spencer, Graduate Support Director, and Students from Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School

8:10 PM

MISSION APPEAL

8:30 PM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- Menu -

FIRST COURSE

Watermelon, Creamy Australian Feta,
Pickled Cucumber, Watermelon Radish,
Lavash, Sumac Vinaigrette

SECOND COURSE

Braised Short Rib of Beef with Red Wine Jus
Grilled Salmon with Lemon Beurre Blanc
Black Pepper and Parmesan Risotto
Broccolini and Carrot

DESSERT

Neapolitan Mousse Dome, Strawberry Coulis,
Vanilla Bean Ice Cream

Freshly Brewed Regular & Decaffeinated Coffee
and Selection of Hot Teas



- Guest Speakers -

INVOCATION // ALEXANDER DOMINGUEZ



St. Cecilia School & Academy '24

Alexander is a recent graduate of St. Cecilia School & Academy and a rising freshman at St. John Vianney High School. A natural leader who loves to draw and play soccer, he currently serves as an Access Enrichment Team Captain and a member of the St. Cecilia Student Council. Alexander also participates in Saint Louis University's STEM development program, iSCORE, and plans to study engineering in college.

PARENT PERSPECTIVE // GWENDOLYN FITZPATRICK

Gwendolyn Fitzpatrick and her husband Marquis understand the transformative impact of a quality education. As the proud parents of three accomplished Access scholars — Shayla (UMKC '22, Cardinal Ritter College Prep '18), Jada (Jackson State University '24, CRCP '20), and Jordan (North Carolina A&T '27, CRCP '23) — they've watched their daughters flourish in the program, excelling in both high school and college. "It takes a village," says Gwendolyn, a St. Louis native and project manager at Charter Communications. "And my family has been truly blessed to have Access. Thank you for playing such a key role in my daughters' growth."



COLLEGE & CAREER // MCKENZIE RENFROE



Tuskegee University '27, Lutheran High School North '23, Most Holy Trinity Catholic School '19

A graduate of Lutheran High School North and an alumna of Most Holy Trinity, McKenzie is a Boniface Scholar and rising sophomore at Tuskegee University in Alabama. She's an animal science major with an emphasis on pre-veterinary medicine and is involved in several on-campus organizations, including Pre-Vet Club, Animal Care and Rescue, and MANRRS, a national society that empowers minorities in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences.

- Enrichment Performers -



MENTORS IN MOTION

MIM is a mentorship and leadership development program that inspires, educates, and empowers youth through music, technology, and innovative arts. By guiding students through the process of writing, producing, and recording songs, creating music videos, and designing and marketing apparel, this dynamic program fosters artistic expression and creativity while cultivating essential life and job skills.



SISTER THEA BOWMAN ROBOTICS TEAM

The Bow Botz Robotics Team has been building robots and competing at the Clavius Robotics Jamboree since 2016. The Clavius Project, a STEM program developed by students at Saint Louis University High School, exposes students to robotics, programming, and 3D printing. This year, 32 schools from the Saint Louis area participated in the annual Jamboree held at SLUH. The Bow Botz, led by Mary Migalla, brought 22 students to the event and earned a “Gold with Distinction” ranking.



SISTER THEA BOWMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHOIR

A popular offering in Access' extended-day enrichment program, the Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School Choir was founded in 2004 as an integral part of the school's Education Through Music and the Arts Program. It's directed by Ms. Vera Boldin, a retired educator with a rich background in music, and performs regularly at Friday mass and other churches, community events, and galas across the Metro East.



- 2024 Pillar Award Winner -
MARY MCGEATHY

The Access Academies Pillar Award celebrates an individual who enthusiastically reflects our dedication to giving every student, every chance, every day. This year's winner is Ms. Mary McGeathy, a middle school teacher and former principal at Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School.

Since arriving at Sister Thea Bowman in 2004, Mary has been a guiding force in shaping the educational landscape for her students. She played a pivotal role in integrating special programs like arts and music, extended day, and liturgical dance into the school's curriculum, as well as in launching the Access program in 2018.

In addition to her daily teaching responsibilities, Mary helps plan and supervise the Access after-school enrichment program, runs the reading and writing workshop and book club, and teaches yoga and mindfulness. She's passionate about lifelong learning and can often be found playing the violin, singing in the choir, or dancing alongside her students. A beacon of inspiration for both students and staff alike, Mary's steadfast commitment to the Access mission and her tireless efforts to enrich the lives of those around her continue to leave an indelible mark.

- Empowering Students Across the St. Louis Region Since 2005 -

Access Academies partners with **26** private, college-preparatory schools and has supported students in more than **47** local high schools across the St. Louis region. This academic year, Access served **454** students in **3** partner middle schools, **38** area high schools — including **20** private, college-preparatory schools — and **49** colleges and post-secondary institutions across the country.

OUR IMPACT



97%

Graduated high school on time (compared to 86% nationwide)



99%

Accepted to college-preparatory high schools



93%

Accepted to college or other post-secondary institution

REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES 2011-2021*

St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS)

HISPANIC ||||| 65.8%

BLACK ||||| 67.9%

Charter Schools

HISPANIC ||||| 62.5%

BLACK ||||| 80.3%

Suburban/St. Louis County (Ladue, Clayton, Parkway, etc.)

HISPANIC ||||| 89.3%

BLACK ||||| 84.8%

Access Academies

HISPANIC ||||| 96%

BLACK ||||| 99.4%



*Access Academies' high school graduation rates for both African American (99%) and Hispanic (96%) students exceed the national averages for both racial and ethnic groups, as well as the graduation averages for schools in St. Louis City (including St. Louis Public Schools and St. Louis Charter Schools), which are less than 90%.

- Our Three Programming Pillars -

COUNSELING

Individualized Support Increases Academic Success

Research proves that strong relationships are the foundation for student success. At Access, every student is embraced and supported by a community of trusted, caring adults who help them persist and succeed in school, work, and life. Our individualized counseling ensures every student's academic, social, financial, and emotional needs are met.

ENRICHMENT

Challenging Our Youth to Dream

Access provides over 1,035 hours of high-quality after-school and summer enrichment programming to our middle school students each year, a support that promotes student achievement, encourages positive behavior, and expands their definition of success. Our donors can be confident that their support is making a lasting difference. According to the Afterschool Alliance, "Afterschool programs also provide a significant return-on-investment, with **every \$1 invested saving at least \$3** through increasing youth's earning potential and improving their performance at school."^{*}

^{*}'This is Afterschool' Fact Sheet. Afterschool Alliance. (2020, March). [afterschoolalliance.org/documents/ National-One-Pager-2020.pdf](https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/National-One-Pager-2020.pdf)

SCHOLARSHIPS

Illuminating a Path by Eliminating Financial Barriers

At Access, we believe in equity: that every student should have every chance to thrive every day. Since our founding in 2005, Access has contributed more than **\$9 million** in financial scholarships to high school and college students. It's an investment that eliminates financial barriers for our families and uplifts the St. Louis region.



- Partner Middle Schools -

St. Cecilia School & Academy (South St. Louis)
St. Louis Catholic Academy (North St. Louis)
Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School (East St. Louis)



- Scholarship Partner High Schools -

Althoff Catholic High School
Bishop DuBourg High School
Cardinal Ritter College Prep
Chaminade College Prep
Christian Brothers College
High School
Cor Jesu Academy
De Smet Jesuit High School
Duchesne High School
Gibault Catholic High School
Incarnate Word Academy
Lutheran High School North
Lutheran High School South
Marquette Catholic High School

Nerinx Hall
Notre Dame High School
Principia School
Rosati-Kain Academy
St. John Vianney High School
St. Joseph's Academy
Saint Louis Priory School
St. Louis University High
St. Mary's South Side Catholic
High School
Ursuline Academy
Villa Duchesne
Visitation Academy
Westminster Christian Academy



- Post-Secondary Acceptances -

Congratulations to our graduating high school seniors who have been accepted to the following **55** colleges and universities.

Alabama A&M University
Central Michigan University
Claflin University
Clark Atlanta University
Columbia College Chicago
DePaul University
Dillard University
Elizabeth City State University
Fisk University
Fontbonne University
Fort Valley State University
George Mason University
Hampton University
Harris-Stowe State University
Illinois College
Illinois State University
Jackson State University
Kansas City Art Institute
Kean University
Lincoln University of Missouri
Lindenwood University
Louisiana State University
Maryville University
McKendree University
MidAmerica Nazarene University
Missouri State University
Moberly Area Community College
Norfolk State University

North Carolina Central University
Ranken Technical College
Rochester Institute of Technology
Saint Louis University
Santa Fe College
Savannah College of Art and Design
Seton Hall University
Southeast Missouri State University
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville
St. Charles Community College
St. John's University-New York
St. Louis Community College
Texas Southern University
The University of Memphis
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
University of Kansas
University of Louisville
University of Missouri-Columbia
University of Missouri-Kansas City
University of Missouri-St Louis
University of North Carolina at
Greensboro
University of San Francisco
University of Wyoming
Virginia Commonwealth University
Webster University

**Congrats
2024
Graduates!**

- Thank You to Our Sponsors and Supporters -



John and Margie
Simon



The Simon Law Firm, P.C.
Attorneys at Law

LEWIS RICE



Gus and Kelly
Gast



Chris Schmidt and Silvia
Ledesma Ortiz



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Kent Family Foundation

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A LASTING LEGACY

John Charles Vatterott

(1943-2023)



Access Founder
Chair Emeritus

"We believe every child can reach his or her full potential if given the right structure, environment, education, motivation, and inspiration."

Terrence James Mehan

(1951-2023)



Program Committee Chair
Graduate Support Director
Director of Development

"Seeing young men and women succeed in life when given the opportunity is the greatest personal reward I have received."

VATTEROTT

FOUNDATION

We are proud to partner with Access Academies as they work to create equity in education across the St. Louis region.



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