

# CATHOLIC NEW YORK

December 26, 2013

## Student Speaker Thanks Sponsors, Cardinal 'Penpal' at ICSF Dinner

By JULIANN DosSANTOS

Speaking to guests at the New York Public Library, a high school student who benefits from the Inner-City Scholarship Fund's "Be A Student's Friend" program, said, "I represent thousands of students who receive a Catholic school education in New York City because of the scholarship support we receive from Inner-City Scholarship Fund and its donors."

The speaker, Katherine Roman is a sophomore at Preston High School in the Bronx. During her speech, she thanked her sponsor, Cardinal Egan.

"Not only is Cardinal Egan my sponsor, and Your Eminence, I love our pen pal relationship, I learned that this sponsorship actually came from Mr. and Mrs. Di Piazza in honor of Cardinal Egan's 80th birthday," she said. (Cardinal Egan is now 81.)

Sam and Melody Di Piazza were presented with the Inner-City Scholarship Fund Award for their commitment to ICSF. Their act of generosity toward Katherine Roman is just one example of the work they have done for ICSF. Cardinal Dolan presented the award.

The 37th annual dinner raised \$1.8 million.

Katherine added, "How incredibly generous of them to think of me, a girl from the Bronx, to help celebrate Cardinal Egan! As a result, I have not only benefited from their extraordinary generosity but have also received ongoing encouragement from our letters."



**Katherine Roman said she dreams of becoming a marine biologist. "I know my future dreams will be possible because I have had the good fortune of being sponsored by the work of Inner-City Scholarship Fund and very kind people."**

She proudly told the 350 people gathered at the library's Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan the evening of Dec. 19 that she is in all honors classes and has maintained an academic average

of 98 at Preston.

She said she dreams of becoming a marine biologist and said, "I know my future dreams will be possible because I have had the good fortune of being sponsored by the work of Inner-City Scholarship Fund and very kind people."

Mo Rocca, CBS Sunday Morning correspondent and ICSF trustee, served as the master of ceremonies.

Throughout the evening guests were treated to performances by the St. Barnabas High School and Mount St. Michael Academy school choirs and performer Angela Meade, an operatic soprano with the Metropolitan Opera. The Inner-City Scholarship Fund



Maria R. Bastone

**HONORS**—Left, Cardinal Dolan and Peter T. Grauer, chairman of Bloomberg and board president of ICSF, greet award honorees Sam and Melody Di Piazza, at the New York Public Library Dec. 16. Above, student speaker Katherine Roman of Preston High School, meets Cardinal Dolan, and her ICSF "Be A Student's Friend" sponsor, Cardinal Egan.

was founded in 1971 by Cardinal Cooke and a group of executives of various religious backgrounds. It provides tuition assistance to more than 7,000 students in 79 inner-city Catholic schools in Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island. Ninety-six percent of graduates from ICSF schools pursue college.

"The supporters in this room, particularly Melody and Sam Di Piazza, have affected the lives of countless students through their commitment and support of Catholic schools," said Susan George, executive director of ICSF, in her remarks at the dinner.

"There is no greater gift than providing a child with a quality education," she said.