

Award Dinner Raises Funds for ICSF Schools, Spotlights Student Musicians



Mount Carmel/Holy Rosary School second grader and violinist Janiya Scriven is greeted by Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan and honoree Peter T. Grauer during the 2009 Award Dinner reception.

Peter T. Grauer, the President of Inner-City Scholarship Fund's Board of Trustees and Chairman of Bloomberg LP was honored at ICSF's Award Dinner last December 8th at the majestic Mandarin Oriental that overlooks Columbus Circle and Central Park. Nearly 500 guests attended the 33rd annual event, raising \$1.6 million for ICSF. Topping off the excitement of the event was a surprise visit by His Honor Michael R. Bloomberg, the Mayor of New York City.

With panoramic views of the midtown skyline as a backdrop, ICSF Trustee and comedian Mo Rocca acted as master of ceremonies for the evening's program which featured ardent speeches and engaging vocal performances by students from our inner-city Catholic schools. Our honoree enlisted four exemplary Co-Chairs — Judith M. and Russell L. Carson, Richard M. Cashin and Thomas S. Murphy, Jr. — to assist him with fundraising and generating attendee enthusiasm for ICSF's mission in support of inner-city children.

The St. Ann School Chorus performed as guests settled into the dining room. After viewing a video about ICSF and Peter Grauer's instrumental role on behalf of the children of ICSF over the

years, Mo Rocca talked about his reasons for sponsoring ICSF children through the *Be A Student's Friend* program, and about the ways it has profoundly influenced these children's lives. Mo then described the acute financial hardships that many inner-city families have faced this year and which have imperiled their children's enrollment at Catholic schools.

After this, Mo introduced "Text to Pledge," an appeal to the audience to make a real time pledge by mobile phone to support emergency tuition assistance for ICSF students experiencing a catastrophic financial crisis. His tremendously effective appeal generated nearly \$70,000 in pledges for the emergency fund by the end of the night.

More exciting ICSF events are in store during 2010. On Tuesday, May 4th at Cipriani 42nd Street, the 34th Annual FRIENDS Gala will take place. Our website will soon have information about next fall's Annual Award Dinner.

If you would like further information about Inner-City Scholarship Fund events, please contact Marion Whiting at whiting@icsf-nyc.org or call 646-794-3332.



New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg speaks at the Annual Award Dinner.



The St. Ann Elementary School Chorus sings for the audience at the 2009 ICSF Annual Award Dinner.

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Pictured at the 2009 FRIENDS Gala from left: Paul Woolard, Anthony de Nicola, Christie de Nicola, Ruth Woolard, Samuel Di Piazza, Melody Di Piazza, Dierdre Wimmerschoff, Archbishop Timothy Dolan, John Farrell, Dr. David Hidalgo, Howard Rubenstein, Mary Ann Tighe, Susan George, Laurie Grauer and Peter Grauer

Dear Friends,

I want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to you for standing by the children of Inner-City Scholarship Fund. Despite a very challenging economy, you have not wavered from supporting this very important cause. It is heartening to see how many of you stepped up to ensure sponsored students remain in their Catholic school.

For many of our children school is not only a place where they learn, it is also a place where they are nurtured. Tough times have fallen on so many of our families and knowing that even a modest school tuition is being taken care of relieves so much pressure for them. Your contributions, both financial and time, mean so much to those who benefit from them. The articles in this newsletter show the inspiring dedication of our donors. It also contains touching examples of our ICSF students demonstrating ways they themselves have been learning to care for our community and the world we all share. On behalf of the staff and all of the families we serve, thank you so much for your allegiance to us.

With sincere thanks,

Susan George
Executive Director

20th Annual Lawyers' Luncheon Is a Tremendous Success



2009 St. Thomas More Award Recipient John S. Kiernan, Esq., fields questions from students during a volunteer visit to Immaculate Conception School on the Lower East Side.

On October 28th, over 400 attorneys attended our 20th Annual Lawyers' Luncheon at the Starlight Roof of the Waldorf Astoria. The event was a huge success, raising nearly \$400,000 for inner-city Catholic schools.

His Excellency Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan presented this year's honoree, John S. Kiernan, Esq., with the Saint Thomas More Award given annually to members of the legal profession who exemplify the virtues of St. Thomas More: Scholarship, leadership, loyalty to God, country and service. A founding member of the 21-year-old Lawyers Committee,

Mr. Kiernan is a Partner at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP.

Mr. Kiernan is Co-Chair of the firm's Litigation Department and Chair of its Ethics Committee. He is also former Mayor of Pelham Manor, New York where he lives with his wife Lisa and five children.

If you are interested in being a part of the Lawyers Committee, please contact Meghan McGuinness at Meghan.McGuinness@archny.org or call 646-794-3270.

ICSF Students Spearhead Several Relief Drives to Assist Victims of Earthquake in Haiti

The tragic earthquake in Haiti has resonated throughout our school communities. The actions taken by our students, staff and teachers demonstrate compassion and how to help one's neighbor. For many of the children at our schools, this lesson is not a distant concept. According to Mary Barry, principal of **Immaculate Conception School** on the Lower East Side: "The children of Immaculate Conception School have contributed to the Catholic Relief Services fund for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Our music teacher, Mr. Edsel-Samy Renaud, who lost his mother and sister, is presently in Haiti assisting with relief efforts and helping family and friends who are struggling through this difficult time."

The **Our Lady of Grace School** community in the Bronx has been deeply affected and is contributing to the relief efforts in a meaningful way. Principal Ms. Daphne Lewis writes: "Students are offering daily prayers for the Haitians and their country, donating money and bottled water to aid the Haitian relief efforts. Parents are also donating canned goods and children's clothing. The pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish is from Haiti. He was in Haiti attending his



The Academy of Mount Saint Ursula's Council Advisory Board – Kailani Capote, Class of '10, Kiara Vega '10, Crystal McMillian '10, Adeola Okoduwa '10 and School President Fr. John Vigilanti presenting a check to Catholic Relief Services for the emergency Haiti relief operations.

grandfather's funeral and returned on the Sunday before the disaster on Tuesday, the 12th of January."

Our Lady Queen of Angels School has taken on Haiti relief as a school-wide service project. Sabrina Bazalais, a *Be A Student's Friend* – sponsored sixth grader, has family in Haiti. Immediately after the quake her friends put up signs

throughout the school asking for prayers and small donations. This immediate heart-rending response has grown. Now, according to principal Ms. Joanne Walsh, "all classes are 'buddied up,' which means the fourth graders are paired with pre-kindergartners, the eighth graders are with the first graders and the like.

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ICSF Junior Committee Running Volunteer Programs and Fundraising Events in NYC



Students from Sacred Heart School in the Bronx take a hayride with members of the Junior Committee at the Queens County Farm.

There's no stopping ICSF's Junior Committee! It kicked off the fall season with volunteers participating in projects to improve the lives of over 200 inner-city children. This group of young

professionals is extremely efficient in creating and running their own volunteer programs at ICSF supported schools. They carry on their mission of enhancing the lives of underprivileged students through their own organized cultural, educational, athletic and mentoring activities.

Since September, the Committee has been busy hosting various volunteer events, including tutoring sessions, community service projects, field trips, social fundraisers, coaching the second season of their new basketball league and holding a Christmas Party celebration for students.

Additionally, the Junior Committee plans two big fundraising events each year. Last

November 12th, they hosted their Fall Fundraiser at M15, a lounge in TriBeCa. About 100 members and friends attended the event that supported the Committee's operating budget. Over \$3,000 was raised, and the evening was fun and memorable for all.

Please save the date for the Spring Fundraiser on Friday, April 16th which will take place on the beautiful top floor of the Mutual of America Building on Park Avenue.

To learn more about volunteering with the Junior Committee or to see a calendar of coming events and pictures, please visit the Junior Committee page on ICSF's website at: www.icsf-nyc.org/jc.

An Everlasting Gift: *Be A Student's Friend* Sponsors *Breaking the Chain*

In addition to funding scholarships, *Be A Student's Friend* (BASF) sponsors often provide our students with valuable enrichment opportunities. Recently, Melanie Coronetz, a sponsor who is active in promoting the humane treatment of animals in New York City, donated a copy of the book *Breaking the Chain* to all 84 ICSF-supported elementary schools.

Breaking the Chain was written by Debra J. White, a nationally known animal advocate who teaches children about the importance of kindness and compassion for all living creatures. The book has the format of a creative writing and art contest for third graders. Through the fictitious story of "Joey," a dog chained in a backyard, children are challenged to find a solution to the common urban issue of animal neglect.

Four ICSF schools participated in the contest this past fall — St. Angela Merici, St. James, Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary,

and Santa Maria. Teachers reported that the contest reinforced creative writing skills through a subject that is both interesting and relevant to students' lives. One teacher said the contest helped her explain a recent incident of animal abuse in her school's neighborhood. In urban areas where practices such as dog fighting are common, educating children about the treatment of animals is essential to building a community that treats all living things with empathy.

Students from Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School and Santa Maria School were privileged to welcome *Breaking the Chain* author Debra White into their schools last October. Debra spoke about her love for animals and her everyday role in educating others about animal rights. A resident of Arizona, Debra tirelessly advocates for animals in Maricopa County which comprises the Phoenix metropolitan area. She answered questions from students and announced the winners of the contest. Each school had two

winners — one for creative writing and one for art. Winners received an animal themed puzzle as a prize. Contest entries were judged by respected members of the local dog community who were recruited by BASF sponsor Melanie Coronetz.

In preparation for the contest, Ms. Coronetz also donated tickets for Santa Maria students to attend the "Meet the Breeds" show at the Jacob Javits Center last October. Students had a wonderful time meeting dogs and cats and learning about the hundreds of different breeds.

We look forward to having many more schools participate in *Breaking the Chain* next school year. If you would like more information on this contest, please contact Karina Strobl at 646-335-5473 or karina.strobl@archny.org.

ICSF Students Spearhead Several Relief Drives to Assist Victims of Earthquake in Haiti

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Each pair of classes has a goal of raising \$200 which will be given to Catholic Relief Services.

In the Bronx, **St. Simon Stock School** is collecting “pennies for life”; this and any other small contributions from school families will be donated to Food for the Poor, which is currently providing emergency relief to Haiti. Both **St. Philip Neri School** and **St. John School** on Kingsbridge Avenue in the Bronx are running drives to support the Haiti Relief Fund. **Our Lady of Lourdes School’s** initiative will support Catholic Charities in Haiti. The families of **Christ the King School** responded to a community-wide call for Haitian Relief from its principal, Ms. Lenora Yzaguirre. **Holy Family School** also appealed to its community to support Haitian relief, and **La Salle Academy** has asked for donations to help the relief efforts among its high school boys, as did the girls at **Aquinas High School**. The **Academy of Mount St. Ursula** changed what had been planned as a “school spirit” campaign to an effort to support Catholic Relief Services in Haiti among the high school girls there. **Guardian Angel School** designated its community’s donations to Catholic Relief Services, as did **Our Lady of Angels School**.

At **Annunciation School** on 131st Street in Harlem, students raised \$663 for the people of Haiti. Their teacher has sent their donation to the American Red Cross International Relief Fund. **St. Mary Star of the Sea School** in the Bronx will send donations to the American Red Cross as well. **All Saints School** on 130th Street in East Harlem raised more than \$400 that will be donated to the Red Cross. Principal Mr. Michael Lenahan of **Ascension School** on 108th Street says their community will be giving their donations to Catholic Relief Services. The community of **St. Joseph of the Holy Family School** in Harlem also responded to the school’s call to support relief efforts as has the **St. Paul School** community in Harlem.

At **St. Rose of Lima School** on 165th Street, Ms. Judith Santiago, the principal, says “students are collecting money and will be giving it to the Sisters in our school convent who have a convent in Haiti.” At **St. Joseph School** on Bathgate Avenue in the Bronx, the fourth graders are leading the entire school community’s Haiti outreach with guidance from their teacher.

On Friday, January 22nd, the **Notre Dame School** community on West 13th Street held a fundraising event for the Haitian people. Sr. Margaret McEntee, S.C., the campus minister said it will be given to the Jesuit Relief Services for distribution.

The 318 children of **Sts. Peter and Paul School** in Harlem donated \$600 in a five-day period and the school’s staff matched their contributions to the Sisters of Charity who will send the money to Catholic Relief Services and to the Catholic Medical Mission Board.

At **St. James School**, principal Ms. Anne Marie McGoldrick says their plans to help Haiti have a personal touch: “Our parish administrator, Fr. Walter was assigned there and has connections with the parish and school in Croix de Bouquets, a city eight miles north of the capital Port-au-Prince that is the site of tens of thousands of refugees. We will be forwarding our donations to members of his order who are there.”

In Chinatown, **St. Joseph School** on Monroe Street principal Deborah Lopez told us “we will be collecting money from parents, staff and students from February 1st to March 30th for Haiti. Our parish is staffed by the Scalabrini priests; they have a clinic, a school for 400 children and a seminary near the airport. All the buildings sustained damage and the clinic can be open because they have an emergency generator. The school was VERY poor before (the Scalabrinian schools are free all over the world) so our pastor who was there for three years has focused our parish charity on the

school and clinic. Also in Chinatown, the **Transfiguration School** community collected thousands of individual donations for Catholic Relief Services.

St. Brigid School on the Lower East Side is designating money raised from its bake sales for UNICEF.

St. Thomas Aquinas School held numerous bake sales, sponsored by the fifth-grade class under the direction of their teacher Mrs. Kobylarz. The entire school, students and staff, participated by bringing in baked goods for sale and by donating money. The fifth graders decided to send the money to the Catholic Relief Fund and the Red Cross. Principal Ms. Teresa Sopot says: “this is an extension of our annual mission drive theme of kids helping kids around the world.... reaching out from the Bronx to make a difference globally.” **St. Lucy’s School** also is having a bake sale while **St. Helena School** is collecting money and prayers in a water jug. **Immaculate Conception School** on 151st Street in the Bronx is planning a concert by its music department and STEP dance team. **Our Lady of Lourdes School** is planning a “Care Bear Raffle” next month when sustained relief will surely be needed. The principal, Ms. Cathy Hufnagel says their donations will be sent directly to Catholic Charities, ear-marked for Haiti.

Sr. Maureen Flynn, A.S.C.J., principal of **Our Lady of Pompeii School** has been moved by students’ personal and collective responses to the tragedy in Haiti. “There are many times in education that we, as professional educators, wonder if the words and values that we are trying to instill in the lives of our young people are truly being learned. This week I was very touched by the young people at **Our Lady of Pompeii School**. As soon as they heard about the devastation that had taken place in Haiti they asked what they could do to help the people. We decided that we would have a no uniform day and collect donations that we would send to Catholic Relief Services for their service in Haiti.

Happenings at Our Schools

Elementary Schools

- **Blessed Sacrament**

On February 2nd, the school participated in Hoops for Hope. This event raises funds for children in Africa who have been left orphaned by the AIDS epidemic.

- **Immaculate Conception 151st Street**

This year the school has added extra activities for the After School Program. These activities include Nutrition Club, Young Lawyer's Club, Spanish Club and the Rocket Scientist Club. The fourth graders will be going on a cooking trip sponsored by the Junior Committee of ICSF, which overlaps with the Nutrition Club.

- **Our Lady Queen of Angels**

Once a week, a board member of OLQA is teaching the sixth graders about financial literacy. The fourth and fifth grade competed in the first round of Dancing Classrooms Ballroom Dance competition. While the students did not make the next round, they were incredibly poised and spirited. Each student at the school is also learning a second language through the Rosetta Stone Language Program. In February and March, grades six through eight will have the opportunity to participate in a series of art seminars focusing on dance, music, theater, art and history. The students will also visit museums and go on field trips to see live performances.

- **Our Lady of Pompeii**

The school now has eight interactive white boards installed. In addition to the interactive Smart boards, the school has purchased 20 new computers for use in the classrooms and computer labs. The school held an international night dinner where families came together and shared their own native foods, dances and songs.

- **Santa Maria**

Santa Maria students are running their own company, right out of the computer lab! Twice a week after school, select sixth through eighth graders participate in Classroom, Inc., a virtual internship program. They manage The Green Mountain Paper Company, a computer-simulated corporation. Working in small groups, students write a strategic plan, approve land purchases, hire and fire employees, and make other key business decisions. They must balance profitability with worker satisfaction and environmental impact. Their decisions affect the program's outcome. In the process, students also strengthen reading, math, critical-thinking and practical skills.

- **St. Athanasius**

The After School Program includes: art, music, drama, dance and homework help. After School is almost entirely funded by a very generous donor, and the parents contribute \$30 to offset the cost. The fifth and eighth graders will start Dancing Classrooms in March. The fifth-grade class is participating in a social studies supplement called Reach the World, where they are virtually following a family as they travel through South America. The school had two classes follow and study students abroad, and a third class followed a family bike trip across South America. They were able to do this via Skype chats, and the classes looked at the pictures and blogs that the travelers posted.

- **St. Brendan**

Students in grades four through eight are participating in the New York Stock Market Game. For the past two years the teams finished in the top two in their division. This year their portfolios are earning high returns!

- **St. Martin of Tours**

This year the teachers have initiated a program called "Activity Clubs" run by teachers and volunteers. The program brings art, music and drama to the students. Students experience three clubs a year, writing a school newspaper, planning and carrying out school events and learning good sportsmanship by following the rules for various games.

High Schools

- **Academy of Mount St. Ursula**

The students of Mount St. Ursula are well known for their academic achievements, commitment to service, and artistic abilities. One of the team members, Lucille Watkins, was recently designated a Finalist in the National Achievement Scholarship program. This past fall, Adeola Okoduwa participated in a United Nations panel discussion sponsored by the UN Working Group on Girls. Marian Guerra has received multiple awards for her artwork in her four years in the Mount St. Ursula Art Academy and will perform alongside Lucille (Adeola works behind the scenes in stage crew) in the school's spring musical production of Grease. Performance dates: Friday, April 16th, & Saturday, April 17th, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, April 18th, at 2 p.m.

- **Notre Dame**

Report cards brought good news of honors grades for over 85% of the students at Notre Dame School. This is the precursor for over 90% of our graduates obtaining academic scholarships at graduation. Preparation for our first annual Global Awareness Dinner, arranged by our students, was so successful that over 225 guests attended the benefit at Notre Dame on November 10th, 2009. Proceeds went to the Katimel Center run by three Sisters of St. Ursula. The Center cares for 23 Congolese girls who would otherwise be homeless. Every student at Notre Dame School put their faith into action last fall when they made warm fleece blankets to donate to New York's needy, in time for the Christmas season!

- **St. Jean Baptiste**

January has been a very busy month at St. Jean Baptiste High School. Students and staff received news that once again The Cornell Weill Medical College would choose five St. Jean Baptiste students from a citywide competition for placement in the Medical College Student Internship program. They will be assigned to shadow a physician and participate in seminars on developing a research paper. In addition, 30 students have been chosen to participate in "Risk Takers," a leadership-training program for high school girls. Participants meet monthly on Saturdays to watch films about courageous women, and discuss the film with other students and mentors. Participants from the film, including actors, writers, producers, and directors, also speak with the group, sharing their experiences and answering questions.

ICSF Launches a New School Advisory Board Program!

Joining a School Advisory Board is a special opportunity that allows volunteers to work hand in hand with each other and inner-city school administrators to support a school and its students. Members utilize their talents, influence and ingenuity to support the schools' short-term and long-term goals through strategic planning, marketing, recruiting, financial planning, capital improvements and fundraising efforts.

If you are interested in learning more about ICSF's School Advisory Board Program, please contact Ginine Mohamad-Cilenti at 646-794-3357.

inner-city

Newsletter of Inner-City Scholarship Fund, Archdiocese of New York
Winter/Spring 2010 Volume 9, Issue 1

Published twice yearly by:

Inner-City Scholarship Fund
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Save the Date!

34th Annual FRIENDS Gala
Cipriani 42nd Street
Tuesday, May 4th, 2010

Please check out our newly launched website:
www.icsf-nyc.org.



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