



## inner-city scholarship fund

*A Child. A Chance. A Future.*

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Newsletter of Inner-City Scholarship Fund | **Spring 2024**

## Student Spotlight

**Meet Pablo Aguilar – just one of over 9,000 students who attend a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of New York with the support of Inner-City Scholarship Fund. This semester, Pablo, a junior at St. Raymond High School for Boys, was accepted into the prestigious Weill Cornell Medicine Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP).**

HPREP is a nine-week program in which high school sophomores and juniors learn from physicians and other healthcare professionals about their path in the field. The students are paired with a medical student who serves as their mentor to guide them through the college application process, writing a research paper, applying for financial aid, and writing a personal statement.

Pablo's strong desire to work in the medical field comes from his mom, Mrs. Aguilar, who was studying to become a pediatrician in Ecuador before immigrating to the United States. While she was unable to complete her studies, she instilled this same drive in all three of her sons. Pablo's older brothers Julio and Nelson Aguilar both graduated with undergraduate degrees in biology and are both actively applying to medical school.

In addition to the mentors empowering Pablo at home, in school, and in the HPREP program, he receives inspiration from his sponsors, Laurie and Peter Grauer.

Pablo says “I really want to thank Mr. and Mrs. Grauer for all the things they have done for me and my family. The scholarship has really helped take pressure off my parents’ back. I have not taken the scholarship for granted. I have applied myself to my studies at St. Raymond’s and now, as a junior, I am ranked #2 out of the whole class. Hopefully one day I will be able to give back to inner-city students who are struggling to pay tuition in high school just like Mr. and Mrs. Grauer have done for me.”

We wish Pablo the best of luck as he chases his dreams, and we are so thankful for all our sponsors who are helping students on their journey. 🙏

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The 2023-2024 school year has been one of hard work and achievement for our students, and it is hard to believe the school year is over half of the way through. Our scholarship recipients are actively learning and realizing their potential, both in the classroom and beyond. They do so with great appreciation for the life-changing opportunity they receive due to the generosity of our loyal and generous supporters.

Pablo, the focus of our cover story, is well underway in the pursuit of his dreams, thanks in large part to the encouragement of family and teachers. He also expresses an enormous amount of gratitude for the scholarship he receives that provides him with an education that pushes him to aim big. Students like Pablo give purpose to the work of Inner-City Scholarship Fund, and we take pride in witnessing all our students achieve their goals.

In the pages that follow, we hope you enjoy learning more about the people who help make our work possible and the students and families we serve. We value the support of so many who allow us to make such an impact. 🙏



Gratefully,

Jill Turner Lloyd

*Executive Director, Inner-City Scholarship Fund*

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# 46th Annual Awards Dinner

With the help of numerous supporters, Inner-City Scholarship Fund raised over \$1.1 million at the 46th Annual Inner-City Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner honoring Christine and Steve Schwarzman. Hosted by Mo Rocca of CBS Sunday Morning, 350 guests attended the event on November 28 at the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan.

The evening opened with special performances by the choirs of St. Raymond Elementary School, Cardinal Hayes High School, and the Academy of Mount St. Ursula.

His Eminence, Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, and Peter T. Grauer, President of Bloomberg Inc., Chairman Emeritus of Bloomberg, L.P., and President of Inner-City Scholarship Fund, presented the 2023 Inner-City Scholarship Fund Award to Stephen A. Schwarzman, Chairman, CEO, and Co-Founder of Blackstone, and Christine Schwarzman, intellectual property attorney, Tony Award-winning producer, and Trustee for Inner-City Scholarship Fund, for their deep and impactful commitment to providing a life-changing Catholic school education to Inner-City students.

Christine Schwarzman thanked everyone for coming to the event and called Inner-City “one of the great, quiet successes of New York.” Steve Schwarzman highlighted that “the way we become successful is through education. It is a passport to a better life. Christine and I believe that everybody



*Christine and Steve Schwarzman with Cardinal Dolan*

should have a shot for success and a better life.” He encouraged everyone in the room to sponsor more students and visit them in their schools.

This year’s event also featured student speakers Zoe Brito, a senior at St. Raymond’s Academy for Girls and Rowan Torres, a senior at LaSalle Academy for Boys. Both Zoe and Rowan are current Schwarzman Scholars. Zoe and Rowan beautifully represented the well-rounded education one can receive through Catholic schools. Zoe hopes to be a biomedical engineer after college. Meanwhile, Rowan spoke passionately about the arts programs in his schools and explained that he hopes to go to law school. Both Zoe and Rowan expressed their deep gratitude for the opportunities their scholarships have given them.

Last but certainly not least, there was a special performance from Broadway actors Erika Henningsen and Kyle Selig, accompanied by Evan Zavada. Erika and Kyle met during their time playing opposite one another in the musical, *Mean Girls*, a musical that Christine Schwarzman produced. Erika and Kyle married in May 2023. They put together a truly enjoyable end to our evening together in support of Inner-City Scholarship Fund. 🎆



*Christine Schwarzman with Schwarzman Scholar Alumni*

***Save the date for Inner-City’s 47th Annual FRIENDS Gala on Tuesday, April 30th.***

# 34th Annual St. Thomas More Award Luncheon

On October 25, the Lawyer’s Committee of Inner-City Scholarship Fund honored Stephen J. Brogan, Partner at Jones Day, and Dana L. Mark, Partner at Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP, at the 34th Annual Saint Thomas More Award Luncheon at Cipriani 42nd Street in Manhattan.

The annual luncheon welcomed almost 350 guests and raised more than \$930,000 in support of Inner-City’s mission to provide scholarship support for underserved Catholic school students in the Archdiocese of New York.

Dana L. Mark was presented with the John P. Cooney Award for Mentorship and Community Involvement. She attended St. Jean Baptiste High School and from that experience, her education became “building blocks for her future endeavors, whether it be academic or going on in life itself.” Dana now serves on the board of St. Jean Baptiste and believes in the funding of scholarships because “every young person who wants access to Catholic education should have the opportunity. Through the scholarships, you are opening doors, removing barriers, and giving students an opportunity to show what they can do.”

Each year, the Saint Thomas More Award is presented to a member of the legal profession who exemplifies the virtues of St. Thomas More: scholarship, leadership, loyalty to God and country, and service to the legal profession. Stephen J. Brogan embodies these qualities as a partner at



Yulibeth Aquino



Dana L. Mark and Sr. Maria Cassano

Jones Day and a dedicated philanthropist. He spoke about what St. Thomas More has meant to him throughout his professional career, touching on how he feels unworthy to be given this award. “St. Thomas More is someone who gave his life for his faith, was the top lawyer in the country, and the King would have given him anything he wanted, but his principle carried the day.” This example has been a guide to how Brogan has lived and worked. He also thanked the people of Jones Day for their generosity to the event and Inner-City Scholarship Fund.

Yulibeth Aquino, a scholarship recipient and senior at St. Raymond Academy for Girls, spoke about the different ways that Inner-City Scholarship Fund and her *Be A Student’s Friend* scholarship are positioning her for success in life. Yulibeth also took part in Inner-City’s Job Opportunity Program and was fortunate to be placed at Ashurst Law Firm for an internship. Yulibeth told the audience, “This scholarship has removed an immense amount of pressure from my mother’s shoulders, and we are extremely grateful for the assistance it has provided. Knowing there is someone so invested in my success acts as a constant motivator in my life.”

The Lawyers Committee supports Inner-City’s mission to make a high-quality, values-based Catholic school education possible for thousands of deserving children from low-income families. 🙏

**To learn more about the Lawyers Committee, contact Jill Lloyd at [Lloyd@InnerCityNYC.org](mailto:Lloyd@InnerCityNYC.org).**



Stephen J. Brogan and Bishop Whalen



# Our Junior Board

## The Junior Board of Inner-City Scholarship Fund accomplished a lot this fall.

The volunteers hosted a Halloween party at Incarnation School and a Christmas party at St. John Chrysostom School. At both parties, the participants guided the students through crafts, decorated cookies, and had a pizza party! It was an exciting couple of days for both the students and volunteers. Everyone left with smiles on their faces.

The Junior Board also organized a trip to the Statue of Liberty for students from St. Anselm School. Only two students on the trip had ever been there before, even though they all grew up in New York City. It is wonderful to be able to provide these experiences that are so meaningful to the students.

Two of the Junior Board Co-Chairs, Anna Brennan and Beau O'Connell, visited with the two students that the Junior Board sponsors at Christ the King School in the Bronx. Go to page 6 to learn more about their visit as it relates to Anna Brennan and her family.



*Junior Board members and friends*

December 1, the Junior Board kicked off the Christmas season with a fundraising event called “Champagne and Snowballs” at Goldbar. Events like these enable our Junior Board to provide students with impactful experiences like those detailed here.

The Inner-City Junior Board has several field trips, basketball programs and school parties planned for this Spring. If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved, please email [Juniors@InnerCityNYC.org](mailto:Juniors@InnerCityNYC.org). 🎓



*John Morrison with students on Statue of Liberty Field Trip*



*Riley Walrath, Stephen DeSimone, Cara Farelli*



*Students from Incarnation School*



*Anna Brennan, Beau O'Connell, and scholarship recipients*



*Volunteers with students at Incarnation School*



# Meet Junior Board Co-Chair, Anna Brennan and her mom

**Anna Brennan is not only a dedicated volunteer but is also a true believer in the power of Inner-City's mission.**

On December 12, Anna, along with fellow co-chair, Beau O'Connell traveled to Christ the King School in the Bronx to visit two of the students the Junior Board sponsors annually. These students are supported through funds raised by the Junior Board at their events throughout the year. Anna and Beau were joined by Anna's mom, Patty Brennan, who has a very special family connection to the school. Patty Brennan and six of her siblings attended Christ the King for elementary school. Fun fact; there was one particular school year when Patty and her siblings filled all seven grades, and her mom was working as the reading specialist at the school.

Patty says she and her siblings often reminisce on the size of their classes and how in control their teachers were at Christ the King. "My Catholic school education taught me to be disciplined and do the work. The teachers ingrained in me the basics that you use for the rest of your life. I ended up getting a full scholarship to college and going to law school. I brought those skills (from Christ the King) with me."

Anna Brennan shared that "my mom does not typically reminisce too much about things but when



*Anna Brennan and Patty Brennan*

we were driving down for the visit at Christ the King, she immediately remembered the tiles, the stairs, it clearly meant a lot to her. It was a full circle moment when I found out that the students we sponsor go to Christ the King. It is a proud feeling to be involved in these children's lives by providing their families a sense of security."

Anna went on to say "When I joined the Junior Board, I did not know anybody involved and now I consider them all to be friends. It brings you into a group of like-minded people and fosters a good community. Everyone has careers and social lives that they are managing, but it is nice that we can find time for charity in our busy schedules." 🙌

## "Who Is Mo Rocca?"

**Well... to us he is a dedicated supporter and Celebrity Jeopardy Champion! Mo has been a trustee since 2005 and has sponsored over 130 students through our *Be A Student's Friend* program.**

In December, Mo won the Celebrity Jeopardy quarterfinal match against Amanda Seales and Kyra Sedgwick. Mo went on to compete against Rachel Dratch and Heather McMahan in the semi-finals where, not to our surprise, Mo won again! In the finals, Mo competed against Katie Nolan and Lisa Ann Walter. Mo brought home \$250,000 for Inner-City Scholarship Fund.



*Mo Rocca Competing on Celebrity Jeopardy*

Thank you, Mo, for all you have done for Inner-City and our students, and congratulations! 🙌

# All in the Family

Walter S. Tomenson, Jr., who served on the board of Inner-City Scholarship Fund beginning in 1995, was recently named as Trustee Emeritus and we are delighted that he will remain involved.

Keeping the service to our board in the family, his son, Walter S. Tomenson, III, Managing Director at Marsh & McLennan, has joined the board as of this past fall.

When asked about why he chooses to continue his father's legacy of supporting the mission of Inner-City, Walter says, "Inner-City Scholarship Fund brings together so much of what makes New York the greatest city in the world....children of all backgrounds, the wonderful outreach of the church, individuals and corporations who choose to support New York, and the great faculty that make up our schools. My wife, Virginia, and I are eager for the opportunity to continue supporting Inner-City, and to expose a new generation of New Yorkers to the staff of Inner-City Scholarship Fund and the students and faculty in these wonderful Catholic schools."

Further indication that support of Catholic schools and the work of Inner-City runs in the family, Lindsay Tomenson, Walter's sister, is a current member of Inner-City's Lawyers Committee. Walter says, "My sister, much like my mother, has been supporting Inner-City without fanfare for years. While Lindsay and I enjoyed observing my parents, their friends,



The Tomenson family and friends

and others in black tie, it was probably watching my mother quietly tutoring children in the schools that had the greatest effect on us and demonstrated the importance of supporting these students, schools, and teachers."

Thank you to the entire Tomenson family for their consistent support of our mission over so many years. 🍷



Leslie and Walter S. Tomenson, Jr.

## INNER-CITY BY THE NUMBERS

99%

of high school seniors graduate

98%

high school seniors are accepted to post-secondary education

67%

of students live near or below the federal poverty level

46%

of students are raised by a single parent

91%

of students enrolled are minorities

40%

of students are non-Catholic

9,000+

scholarships provided annually

\$15M+

in scholarships awarded annually





**inner-city scholarship fund**

*A Child. A Chance. A Future.*

1011 First Avenue, Suite 1800  
New York, NY 10022-4112  
Tel 212-753-8583  
Fax 212-371-6461  
innercityscholarshipfund.org



SAINT  
RAYMOND  
ACADEMY  
FOR  
GIRLS



## SAVE THE DATES

**47th Annual FRIENDS Gala: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at Cipriani 42nd Street**

**48th Annual Golf Fore Catholic Schools: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at Siwanoy Country Club**

**35th Annual St. Thomas More Award Luncheon: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at Cipriani 42nd Street**

## Inner-City Scholarship Fund Staff

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