



## Press Release

For Immediate Release

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### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual "Give the Gift of Brilliance" Holiday Fundraiser Raises Over \$19,500 for High School Tuition Scholarships**

**ST. LOUIS, MO. November 24, 2015-** ACCESS (Academies Creating Challenging Education for St. Louis Students) raised over \$19,500 during the third annual "Give the Gift of Brilliance" Holiday Fundraiser held at John D. McGurk's Irish Pub & Garden. Donations raised will support tuition scholarships for more than 200 Academy graduates attending private, college-preparatory high schools in the St. Louis region.

Founded in 2005, ACCESS transforms the challenging middle school years into a launching pad for high school success for socially/economically disadvantaged students in faith-based schools in St. Louis.

To become an Academy graduate, students must complete ACCESS's dynamic middle school program known as the Academy. The Academy includes an extended school day and mandatory summer school during 6th, 7th, and 8th grades to support a robust curriculum, homework assistance, service projects, and enrichment.

Currently, ACCESS is educating more than 135 middle school students in Academies at three Archdiocesan partner schools:

- Most Holy Trinity School & Academy at 1435 Mallinckrodt St. (North St. Louis)
- St. Cecilia School & Academy at 906 Eichelberger. (South St. Louis)
- St. Louis the King School at the Cathedral at 4430 Maryland Ave. (Central West End)

ACCESS also provides a school-based Graduate Support Director to support the extended school day programs, and to develop a long-term relationship with the child and his/her family. This includes, but is not limited to finding a college-preparatory high school that fits the student's unique personality and learning style. This includes high school visits, application support, and more.

After graduating from the Academy, the Graduate Support Director maintains contact with each student to ensure his/her academic success in high school. Additionally, the Graduate Support Director provides college-readiness assistance through college tours, ACT test prep, college application and essay support, FAFSA counseling, and more.

Because of ACCESS's support and services, 98% of ACCESS graduates are admitted to college-prep high school; 99% of ACCESS students graduate on time; and 94% ACCESS students are admitted to college.

For more information regarding this release, please contact Julie Linder, Public Relations for ACCESS Academies, by calling (573) 268-0639.

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Pictured:

*Vatterotts.jpg (Left to Right)- Joan and John Vatterott. John Vatterott is the Chairman of ACCESS Academies' Board of Directors.*

*DianaCannon.BetsyLiberatore.jpg (Left to Right)- Diana Cannon, event planner for the Four Seasons St. Louis, and Betsy Liberatore, Executive Director of ACCESS Academies. The Four Seasons- St. Louis donated a package as the grand prize for the raffle drawing.*

*Partypic.jpg- Donors and supporters of ACCESS Academies*

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