

Annual Fund SAINT MARY SCHOOL

2011-2012

Annual Giving—Making a Difference

What is the Saint Mary School Annual Fund?

The SMS Annual Fund is made up of annual gifts from parents, alumni, grandparents, board members, faculty, staff, and friends of SMS. All gifts are unrestricted contributions. Funds are used to meet operating expenses and to support faculty appreciation awards.

Why is the Annual Fund necessary?

The SMS Annual fund is the cornerstone of all fund raising for the School. As part of our mission to make a high quality Catholic education accessible to all, we strive to keep our tuition affordable and we offer significant financial assistance to those in need. As a result, we have roughly a \$1,500 gap between our cost and revenue per student—tuition alone does not fully cover expenses despite our exceptional budget discipline. Simply raising tuition to eliminate this gap would run counter to our mission of accessibility and could negatively impact enrollment. Therefore, we rely on the Annual Fund as a crucial component of our annual budget.

The Annual Fund model provides a tax deductible way for all of our families, alumni and friends to support the school at whatever level is most appropriate for them. It also maximizes fundraising efficiency, directing 100% of funds raised to the school (vs. other fundraising programs that incur substantial administrative costs.)

What are the goals of the 2011-2012 Annual Fund and how are the funds utilized?

The 2011-2012 Annual Fund goal is \$175,000. Proceeds from the Fund are an essential component of the school's budget, used for a variety of key operating expenses, capital expenditures, annual staff appreciation awards and future reserves.

How long do I have to pay my pledge?

Payment in full is requested by April 1, 2012. For your convenience, installment giving is available, allowing you to schedule your contributions as smaller, more convenient payments. Please contact Saint Mary School Business Manager Pam Rowella at (203) 438-7288 x233 if you have any questions about an installment contribution.

Is my donation tax deductible?

Yes! Because Saint Mary School is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit entity, your contribution to the Annual Fund will qualify as a charitable contribution for tax purposes. Contributions are normally deductible in the year payment is received by SMS, but you should consult a tax professional with any questions.

What are matching gifts?

Many employers match their employees' charitable gifts on a 1:1, 2:1, or 3:1 basis. Please check with your employer to see if they have a matching gift program.

Can I make a gift of stock?

Yes. Often, a stock gift can bring the donor greater tax savings than a cash gift. The donor avoids paying capital gains taxes on the donated stock and receives a charitable deduction for its full fair market value. As always, you should consult a tax professional with any questions.

What are giving societies?

Giving societies are employed by many charitable organizations to recognize the various levels of support they receive from donors. Typically, fundraising is most successful when it strikes a balance between higher dollar leadership gifts and broad participation, regardless of dollar amount. Giving societies allow us to thank all of our donors while recognizing their unique contributions. The SMS Annual Fund has two main giving societies:

The **Saint Mary Society** reflects all individuals, companies, or foundations making a gift of \$1,500 or more. These leadership gifts are a critical foundation of the Annual Fund, as they directly address the roughly \$1,500 gap between tuition and cost per student. Within the Saint Mary Society there are three levels:

\$5,000 +	Angel Society
\$2,500—\$4,999	Blue Ribbon Society
\$1,500—\$2,499	Champion Society

The **Patrons Circle** reflects the vital contributions of the many donors who support Saint Mary School at all other levels:

\$1,000—\$1,499	Principal's Circle
\$ 500—\$ 999	Guardian Circle
\$ 250—\$ 499	Benefactor Circle
\$ 100—\$ 249	Blue and White Circle
\$ 50—\$ 99	Penguins Circle
\$ 1—\$ 49	Friends

We need strong participation in both the Saint Mary Society and the Patrons Circle to help us meet our ambitious goals. Every dollar counts and every dollar makes a difference to the lives of our students.

Is my gift and giving history confidential?

As a contributor to the Annual Fund, your name will appear in a listing of supporters, attributed to one of our giving societies (see above). However, when you make your pledge and/or payment to the Fund, you can request to remain anonymous and your name will not appear in the published listing. Either way, your exact gift amount and giving history will always remain confidential, visible only to the Advancement Coordinator and the school's Business Manager in the course of administering the Annual Fund.