

Harford County high school offers new scholars program

BEL AIR - Before entering the halls of The John Carroll School in Bel Air, 28 in next year's freshman class have already distinguished themselves.

CLASS OF 2022 CARROLL SCHOLARS

From Bel Air Middle School, Bel Air:

Jeremy Biggerman and Chloe Connolly

Fallston Middle School, Fallston:

Emma Runyeon and Max Snellenburg

Fred S. Engle Middle School,

West Grove, Pa.: Madeline Lisi

Harford Day School, Bel Air:

Rosalie McGuirk, Blair Mergerian and Austin Shorts

Immaculate Conception School, Towson:

Abigail Leslie

St. Joan of Arc School, Aberdeen:

Abigail Field and Annelise Lakatta

St. Joseph School, Fullerton:

Gianna Bullington, Colin Dilorio, Gavin Innes, Alita Pirozzi and London Poist

St. Margaret School, Bel Air:

Samantha Ashton, Selona Baker, Jacob Freeland, Nathan Gostomski and Steven Snyder

North Harford Middle School, Pylesville:

Robert Hauf, Benjamin Rosensteel, Travis Smith and Chance Woosley

Rising Sun Middle School, Rising Sun:

Mark Ghattas

St. Stephen School, Bradshaw:

Emily Baranoski

Tome School, North East:

Holden Loader

They are the school's first group in the Archbishop John Carroll Scholarship Program, or Carroll Scholars. As part of the program, they will be eligible to earn the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Diploma, a new distinction from the College Board.

“(The program) is an opportunity for us to highlight the best and the brightest,” said Tom Durkin, principal.

John Carroll is the first Catholic school in the state to offer the diploma, which requires students to complete and earn a score of 3 or higher in the two required yearlong courses, AP Seminar and AP Research, and in four additional AP courses of their choice.

In their first year, Carroll Scholars will take AP Seminar, which will provide a foundation for AP Research, which they will take in their junior year. In the research class, students will prepare a team multimedia presentation and a 1,200-word paper on a topic of their choosing.

Durkin said the AP courses allow students to study topics of interest and to cultivate their individuality.

He estimates that half the Carroll Scholars are interested in pursuing careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), and will likely opt to take science and math AP courses.

John Carroll will offer 20 AP courses for the 2018-19 school year, and will increase that number to 22 by 2019-20. Selona Baker, an incoming Carroll Scholar, is interested in both math and Spanish. Her mother, Julie Baker, has been a teacher at John Carroll for 15 years, and is currently the science department chairwoman.

“She was so excited that she got accepted into the program,” Baker said. “It’s a great opportunity for her to push herself and challenge herself academically.”

Baker chose to educate her daughter in Catholic school beginning at St. Margaret in Bel Air, and said that

Selona has always wanted to attend John Carroll.

“It’s a moral education as well as academic,” Baker said. “It’s a place where I know that the people would be teaching her the right things – not just academically.”

The scholars went through a selection process, with the first step of earning a score

of 90 percent or higher on the High School Placement Test. From there, the applicants were interviewed by faculty of John Carroll and submitted 500-word essays, all read by Durkin, who has a background in teaching English.

Durkin said they expected around 15 scholars, but ended up with nearly double that amount after viewing applications for more than 50 candidates. He said the scholars have a wide variety of interests, and were questioned on their extracurricular activities and service to their communities during the interview.

The Carroll Scholars each received a scholarship of \$5,000 per year.

“We want to prepare the student - mind, body and spirit,” Durkin said.

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