

Regis Philbin donates winnings to Catholic alma mater

NEW YORK – Television personality Regis Philbin recently demonstrated that the education he received at a Catholic high school in the Bronx served him well.

He won \$175,000 on the Fox TV program “Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?” and announced on the air that he would donate his winnings to Cardinal Hayes High School. The episode, which aired Nov. 1, featured celebrities answering questions targeted at the fifth-grade level to win up to \$1 million for charity.

This is not the first time Philbin has donated game-show earnings to his former high school. Last year, he gave the school his \$50,000 prize from winning “Celebrity Jeopardy” on another special episode for celebrities to win cash for their favorite charities.

Philbin, a member of the class of ‘49 at Cardinal Hayes, went on to graduate from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana and has been generous to both schools. In 2000, he donated \$500,000 to Cardinal Hayes to renovate the auditorium. He also led the 1995 and 1999 capital campaigns that funded a \$7 million endowment and the updating of school facilities. He is honorary chairman of the current capital campaign, “Our Future – Your Hands.”

Philbin, whose early television career was in California, said that when he returned to New York he saw “the value of Hayes and what it means to the city.”

He told Catholic New York, newspaper of the archdiocese, that many students from Cardinal Hayes go on to hold important positions in New York, and he said he recognizes the need for continued support of the school.

Father Joseph Tierney, president of Cardinal Hayes, said the school was grateful for Philbin’s continued generosity. He described the popular television host as someone who promotes “the values, teachings and tradition of Cardinal Hayes High School and of the church so well.”

“He has expressed to us that he will do whatever he can to help us and we are so grateful that he thinks of us when these opportunities to give to the school come up for him,” he added.

Philbin, who showed his smarts on the show by answering questions on elementary school subject matter, said it was great to see how much the children participants on the show knew.

He also joked that it was revealing to see “how little you remember from the fifth grade.”