

Schools gala keeps creating Catholic scholarships in Baltimore Archdiocese

The 11th annual gala for Archdiocese of Baltimore schools Sept. 28 saw more than \$720,000 raised in scholarships funds, raising to approximately \$8 million the effort has brought in since its inaugural in 2009, one that had already created more than 1,300 scholarships for students in need.

"It is a true partnership and fraternity," Archbishop William E. Lori said during his remarks.

He noted the work of students and "our outstanding priests, religious, deacons, school presidents, principals, teachers and school board members ... They are why our schools are so excellent."

The archbishop spoke at length about Mother Lange School, and the Oct. 23 groundbreaking on the first new Catholic school to be built in Baltimore City in more than 60 years.

"It is a tangible symbol of the church's commitment to Catholic education, to the City of Baltimore and to our children of today and tomorrow," he said. "The commitment to build a new school ... represents a major investment.

And while we could choose to make that investment in any of our nine surrounding counties, we have chosen to do so in Baltimore, on a block of land on a street named after Martin Luther King Jr., a champion of peace and of human dignity. "And we've chosen to name the school after Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, who founded the first order of nuns of African descent and the first Catholic school for children of color - just a few blocks from the site of our new school.

"We pray others will be inspired to make a similar investment in our city and in those who call it their home."

The evening's entertainment included familiar faces in the form of the choir from Cardinal Shehan School in Baltimore, and students from one of its newest collaborators, Krieger Schechter Day School, on "Ain't No Mountain High Enough."

That segment began with Harrison Fribush, an eighth-grader from the Jewish day school, playing a bongo solo. Fribush has raised \$5,000 for enhancements to the music room at Cardinal Shehan School. According to his mother, Nicole, as part of his Bar Mitzvah project, Fribush established a Go Fund Me page to raise money for both Cardinal Shehan's music program, and Believe In Music, an after school music program for Baltimore City youth.

The event at the Marriott Waterfront included a video presentation on First Fruits Farm and remarks from founders Rick and Carol Bernstein, on the contributions Catholic schools have made in the volunteer-led harvesting of approximately 15 million pounds of fruits and vegetables that has been donated to local food banks, homeless shelters and other food providers.

Andre Hepkins and Lacee Griffith of WBAL-TV served as hosts of the event, whose chairperson was Laura Gamble, a regional president of PNC Bank. The blessing was provided by Bishop Adam J. Parker.

Editor's note: This story was updated Oct. 1, 10:30 a.m., to correct the source of the donation for Cardinal Shehan's music program.

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Also:

Listen here to a Catholic Baltimore radio program about First Fruits Farm