

OZARK CATHOLIC ACADEMY ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL 2020

7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL



Dear OCA Benefactors and Friends,

On behalf of the OCA Board of Governors, the entire OCA Community and myself, I would like to thank you for your generous support of Ozark Catholic Academy! Our 2020-2021 school year was monumental in its firsts. OCA proudly:

- » graduated its first senior class, who received over \$2 million dollars in scholarship offers,
- » awarded ANSAA accreditation,
- » welcomed the largest freshmen class ever,
- » added to its online learning curriculum and expanded its remote learning capabilities,
- » established the Senior Capstone Project,
- » added baseball and spirit squad to our athletics program,
- » experienced five sports qualifying for OCA's first state tournaments, and
- » celebrated the achievement of two athletes who were recognized as All-State performers.

Despite pandemic limitations, OCA maintained its emphasis on personal and spiritual foundation. Trips to the March for Life in D.C. and our annual Mission Trip to Auxier, KY were replaced with volunteer work in the St. Joseph Parish Tontitown Food Pantry and local community outreach programs. We want to acknowledge the much appreciated support of the area priests: Fr. John Connell continues to act as OCA's diocesan liaison; Fr. Jason Sharbaugh, who continues to provide guidance and spiritual support to our board.

Through Federal and State COVID-19 programs, OCA offered a safe learning environment and ensured a high quality educational experience. With many of our development fundraising activities (e.g., Annual BBQ, Casino Night) significantly limited, these funds helped cover school costs that traditional development fundraising activities would support. In spite of limitations, OCA received over \$500,000 in donations.

Education affordability remains a top priority for OCA. Last year, we established the Continuing Catholic Education (CCE) program which created a lower tuition tier at OCA for students continuing the Catholic education path after attending a K-8 Catholic school. OCA's financial aid remains at 20% of tuition levels and through our guidance several OCA students were awarded grants from the ACE Scholarship program. Over 31% of OCA students receive additional tuition assistance, compared to published tuition rates thanks to partners like you, ACE, Reform Alliance, and Growing Catholic Education. In January of 2021, OCA announced that tuition would be frozen through the 2024-25 school year. Funding to support the cost of these programs and the tuition announcement has been provided by OCA philanthropic benefactors through our Guardian Angel Giving Fund. OCA remains committed to offering the highest level of education at the lowest possible cost. We want all students seeking a Catholic education to have access to attend OCA.

Last year, OCA added a Controller who formalized OCA's accounting and budgeting processes. This was instrumental in building a strong culture of fiscal responsibility. For fiscal year 2020-21, OCA operated with a balanced budget while supporting growth and expansion of faculty and programs.

2020-21 was a year like no other. We appreciate your prayers, volunteer hours and your financial support. You made the difference in a year that so many organizations had to cut back or close. As we head into our next phase of growth, we ask for your continued support and the support of new OCA donors.

Please prayerfully consider including OCA in your future philanthropic plans. Rising costs and the need to add more teachers, classroom space, and expanded programs are required to meet our expected enrollment growth. We need the help of the Northwest Arkansas community. We are happy to help meet with you and discuss your philanthropic interests.

May God bless you. I pray that you remain healthy, and once again, thank you for your support.

Your Humble Servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E. Rocha, Sr.".

John E. Rocha, Sr.
Head of School

“
Despite pandemic limitations, OCA maintained its emphasis on personal and spiritual foundation.
”
- John Rocha, Head of School



OCA'S FIRST GRADUATING CLASS

MAY 22, 2021

Arely Arevalo • Adriana Battershell • Becka Buron
Olivia Burtis • Jonathan Cass • Madelyn Eveld • Steven Flores
Isaac McClinton • Tania Mares • Matthew Moix • Therese Rocha • Mary Helen Schaefer

NOW ATTENDING COLLEGE AT:



**2020-2021
SCHOLARSHIPS
AWARDED OVER
\$2 MILLION**

Who We Are



Ozark Catholic Academy aims to implement the Catholic Church's mission of sanctification and evangelization through the Catholic intellectual tradition by graduating young men and women who:

- ✦ Learn widely and deeply for life and seek the truth in all things;
- ✦ Possess insight, imagination, and critical reasoning, while also communicating clearly and persuasively;
- ✦ Strive to live the virtues of wisdom, justice, courage, and moderation as well as faith, hope, and charity;
- ✦ Sanctify themselves and serve others effectively in love and truth, and evangelize the world as they live out the vocations to which they are called.



Ozark Catholic Academy engages students in a rigorous, integrated education that enables them to behold the fullness of reality through both faith and reason and to live the virtues that make one fully human and truly free.

“
I realized my favorite part of going to school was having that Catholic faith present and the sense of family. - Olivia Burtis, Senior
”

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MOTTO AND CREST



The motto: *Docilitas, Veritas, Libertas, and Sanctificate.*

DOCILITY/DOCILITAS: OCA strives to enliven a student's docility — i.e., the spirit of openness to what is taught and the sensitivity to the presence of Truth. Docility, or to be docile, has a very different meaning in various contexts; our use of Docility ties to the Holy Spirit. St. Josemaria Escriva states, "If we are docile to the Holy Spirit, the image of Christ will be formed more and more fully in us, and we will be brought closer every day to God the Father."

TRUTH/VERITAS: Docility engenders a genuine humility (the choice to accept reality as it is), essential to the ultimate reason for education —the pursuit of truth.

FREEDOM/LIBERTAS: Together, Docility and a genuine pursuit of truth, allows one to understand freedom. OCA aims to teach the proper use of freedom. "And you will know the truth and the truth will make you free." (John 8:32)

SANCTIFY/SANCTIFICATE: The pursuit of truth comes to fruition when a student allows himself to be sanctified by the truth so that he may transcend himself in the sanctification of others.

ACCREDITATION GRANTED

In March 2021, OCA received the 7-year accreditation from Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (ANSAA). This involved an extensive assessment, accountability, and internal review on 12 key standards that ranged from the mission statement, school and community programs, professional staff, curriculum, educational programs, instructional materials/resources, student services, physical facilities, finances, development, strategic planning, and technology. Annual reports are provided each September to the ANSAA Board of Directors on our continued progress and growth.



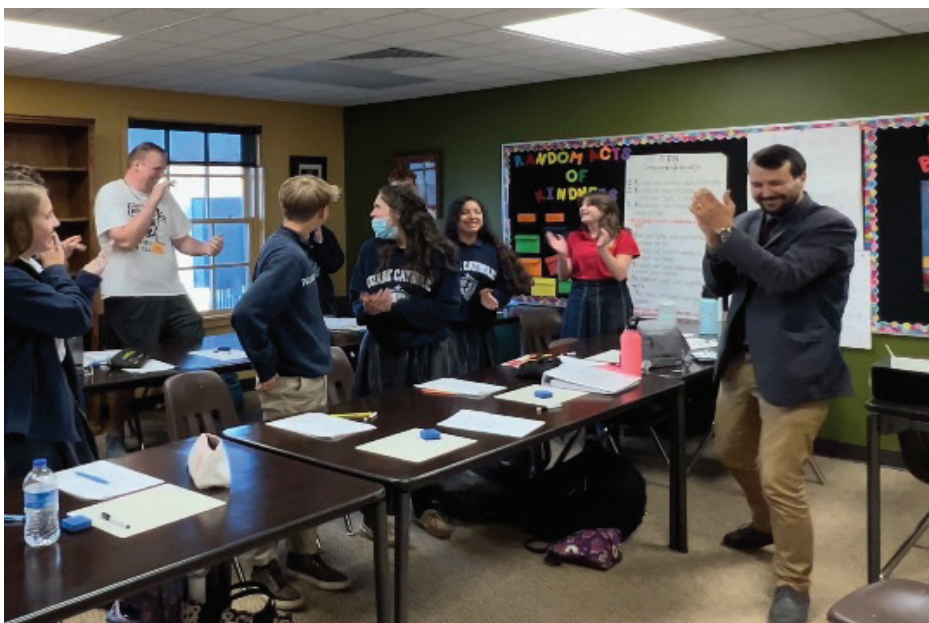
“
I've never known exactly what I wanted to study in college but I hope to find that out during my time here. I decided to come here because of a calling from God... He led me to this school.
- Steven Flores, Senior

WHY WE TEACH, WHAT WE TEACH AT OCA

Our focus from the beginning has strived to form students on the three pillars of Academics, Athletics, and Spiritual Life. Integrated throughout our curriculum are critical thinking skills. Our mission statement declares that we ground students in reality. It is only knowing the world rooted in a disposition of who you are that one can fully comprehend reality and continue to see it with wonder and imagination. Creativity is key in our world today and that creativity can be sparked with the subjects of Latin, Philosophy, and Senior Capstone.

LATIN

Our students have an opportunity to encounter a language that embodies hundreds of years of tradition with its literature, philosophy, history, and the Holy Scriptures within its treasures. Students at Ozark Catholic Academy gain access little-by-little into this tradition and grow year by year to appreciate more the chances to learn from different people, places, and times. In addition, with our Latin classes being spoken, students participate in living encounters and gain skills that will serve them well in their studies of other modern languages or the continued study of Latin. Plus, Latin offers many chances for students to grow their vocabulary in English through root words, similar grammar, and the cultural influence that the Romans have had on our society.



New in 2020

OCA JUNIORS TOUR 7 COLLEGES IN 6 DAYS

Our school community had a great opportunity this past year to visit many college campuses for their Junior Year Leadership Trip. Our students, staff, and faculty members traveled to the University of Missouri, Washington University, St. Louis University, University of Chicago, Hillsdale College, Notre Dame, and Benedictine College. While at each college, OCA students received a personal tour and lectures by various professors.

While the college tours provided the chance to gauge the atmosphere of each campus, the lectures gave students a glimpse into what kinds of classes they may encounter! In addition to this, students attended masses at St. Francis De Sales Oratory in St. Louis and the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Notre Dame, and participated in rosaries at multiple grottoes.

Our group was also privileged to be given a personal tour through the Chicago Art Institute and was hosted by multiple Newman Centers. Our faculty and staff understand how students gain greater knowledge of post-secondary education options and how this allows the student body to bond as a community.



“
The academic program is rigorous... the community of OCA is very uplifting. My favorite thing about OCA is this sense of community that everyone has.
- Mary Doke, Junior

OCA WELCOMES NEW FACULTY



● **MEET
MR. JONATHAN
SHOULTA**

Mr. Shoulta earned his B.A. in Philosophy from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas where he received the 2018 Saint Thomas Aquinas Award for Distinction in Philosophy.

Currently, he is enrolled in the Masters program focusing on Classical Studies through Villanova University in Villanova, Pennsylvania. His background in teaching includes: English, Latin, and Philosophy where he wrote curriculum and developed faculty seminars in Williamsburg, VA. His teaching experience is supplemented with published poetry translations and articles on literature.



● **MEET
MISS KATIE
KARP**

Miss Katie Karp earned a B.A. in English from the University of Central Arkansas and an M.S. in Education from Franciscan University of Steubenville. Miss Karp describes Humane Letters as the heart of the curriculum. “It challenges the students (and myself) to enter deeper into our humanity. These works confront us with major questions that we encounter in our daily lives-- How do we discern and pursue that which is true, good, and beautiful? What does it mean to live the good life? Hearing these stories not only helps us to grow in empathy and understanding of the experiences of others, but allows us to contextualize our own human experience in a richer way.”

Athletics Update

GRIFFIN ATHLETICS: COMING OUT OF THE PANDEMIC



Sports at Ozark Catholic Academy continued to thrive in 2020-21, despite the starts and stops of a pandemic. Athletics afforded students a regular high school schedule and a social outlet in a time when their lives were on hold.

As the school rounded out its third year, OCA added boys baseball and a spirit squad to the roster of sports that students could participate in as athletes.

The Griffins golf, cross country, baseball, and track teams all participated in the State Championships at the end of their seasons. Both the men's and women's varsity basketball teams made it to the regional tournament in Lead Hill with the men's basketball season ending with 26 wins and 11 losses and the women's team ending the season 14-15.

"Our administration, governing board, coaches, parents, and students, all worked together and excelled in continuing to allow our students to compete in athletics this year," said Athletic Director and Head Basketball Coach, Cody Vaught. "We were able to maintain as much normalcy as possible during these unprecedented times."



There is a lot that I like about OCA... I like the one-on-one time with teachers and that personal relationship. I also love getting to play the sport that I love without worrying about getting playing time.

- Isaac McClinton, Senior



Donor Highlight

TERRY & GWEN MATTHEWS **CHAMPIONS** OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

by: Alesia Schaefer



Before the doors of Ozark Catholic Academy opened in 2018, Terry and Gwen Matthews were already faithful supporters in the founding of OCA. The Matthews' have seen the rewards of Catholic education in their lives and believe in the value it could provide families in northwest Arkansas.

Terry, who recently retired after 33 years of service from his position as Executive Vice President and President of Intermodal at J.B.Hunt, was raised in Connecticut and Indiana. His grandmother immigrated from Ireland and had strong Catholic roots. "My grandmother and her sister came here looking for a better life," said Terry. "My great Aunt entered the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in Houston and went on to work as a surgical nurse at St. Mary's Hospital in Long Beach, California. She was one of the biggest fundraisers for the hospital," recalls Terry.

Gwen, raised closer to home in Decatur, came to the Catholic faith as a convert later in life. "I prayed that God would send me a godly man that would hold my

hand in church," said Gwen with a smile. She later converted to Catholicism after marrying Terry, whom she met while working at J.B. Hunt.

Along with their own faith journeys, the couple shared the experience of educating their two girls, Brooke and Brittany, in St. Vincent de Paul Catholic elementary school in Rogers. "We both were very involved in the school, Gwen worked in the school library and I served on the school board, but we felt the formation the girls received in their faith and the instruction they received in academics was just so much better," said Terry.

In 2006, talk of opening a Catholic High School spurred the Matthews to get involved. But, after talking with Bishop James Sartain, who was bishop at the time, they knew the funds were not there to support the long process to start and open a high school. Fast forward 12 years, and the dream of opening a Catholic high school became a reality. Since OCA would operate as an independent high school, meaning it would not have the financial backing of the diocese, the Matthews'

wanted to assist in providing funding for the school's success. "Although we didn't have children going to the school, we wanted to be supportive because it is something our community will greatly benefit from," said Gwen.

Besides being patrons of Catholic education, the Matthews' own Beau Foundation is the organization perhaps closest to their hearts. This non-profit organization was begun by the Matthews' back in June of 2003 after the couple lost their baby boy 11 days after birth. Since the Beau Foundation's first golf tournament in 2004, they have raised money for prenatal care for uninsured women. Funds from this foundation have helped the Community Clinic and Prenatal Pathways through the NWA Community Clinics for the past 18 years.

Looking forward, the Matthews recognize the significance of faith formation in a changing world. "As times are changing we need to keep the faith growing strong," added Gwen. "It was a constant in my life, and we want that to be a constant in other young people's lives."



GRIFFIN FUND CONTINUES TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Created in the 2019-20 Academic Year, The Griffin Fund has become an integral source of operating funds for Ozark Catholic Academy. With over \$715K received to date, The Griffin Fund helps ensure a Catholic education is accessible, affordable, and available to all families that desire it. These funds directly impact all areas of our school. Without these funds OCA would look, act, and feel very different. Thanks to your continued generosity, OCA is able to provide:

- » Financial Aid offered to 29% of student body
- » Leadership Trips for ALL students, every year
- » Daily Transportation to/from campus
- » 10 Athletic teams with 92% student participation
- » Mass celebrated 4 days per week

2020 Donors

LIFETIME LEGACY GIVING \$100,000+

Special recognition and thanks goes to those donors who have generously supported the school with total giving exceeding \$100,000. Our sincerest thanks goes to these early friends that believed in the OCA Mission and Vision that has allowed OCA to bring this dream to reality in Northwest Arkansas.

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A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS

We thank the generous individuals and corporations who provided their personal resources and prayers that allowed us to open our doors on that historic day, August 14, 2018. After more than two decades of exploration and discussion, it would not have been possible to bring a Catholic high school to NWA without their trust and support.

The 2020 Griffin Society thankfully recognizes the following annual donors:

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- no Libertas donors in 2020 -

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I believe it's important to recognize that the religious, social, and political issues we deal with today are not new, and that people have been wrestling with these questions for thousands of years. This may be the only time that our students will encounter ancient literature and philosophy, and I hope that they can take away practical insights on how to live a good, happy life by reading texts that are part of the "Great Conversation." - Mr. Shoulta



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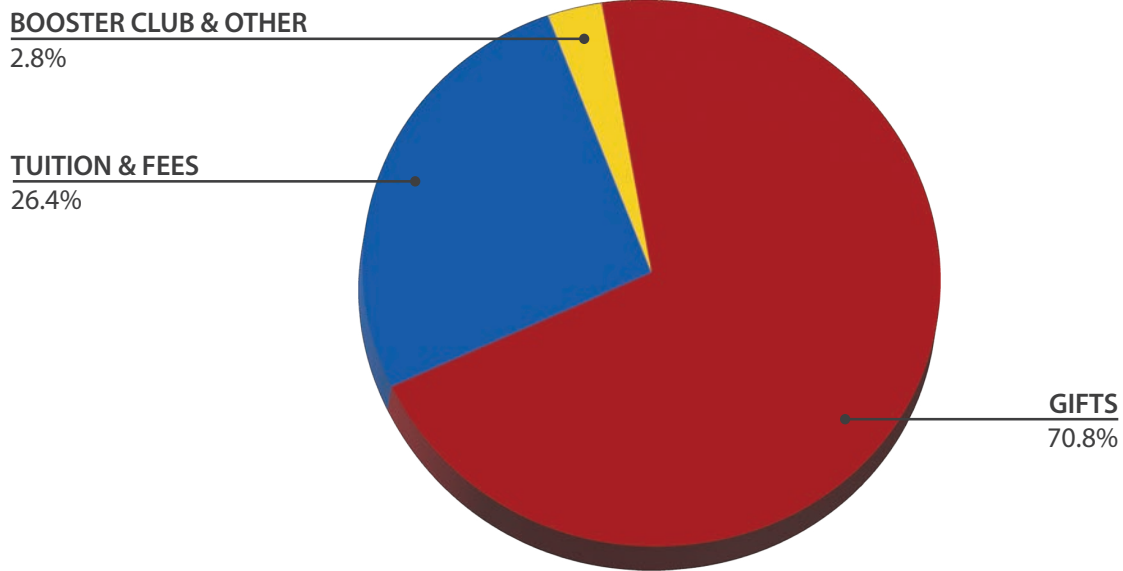
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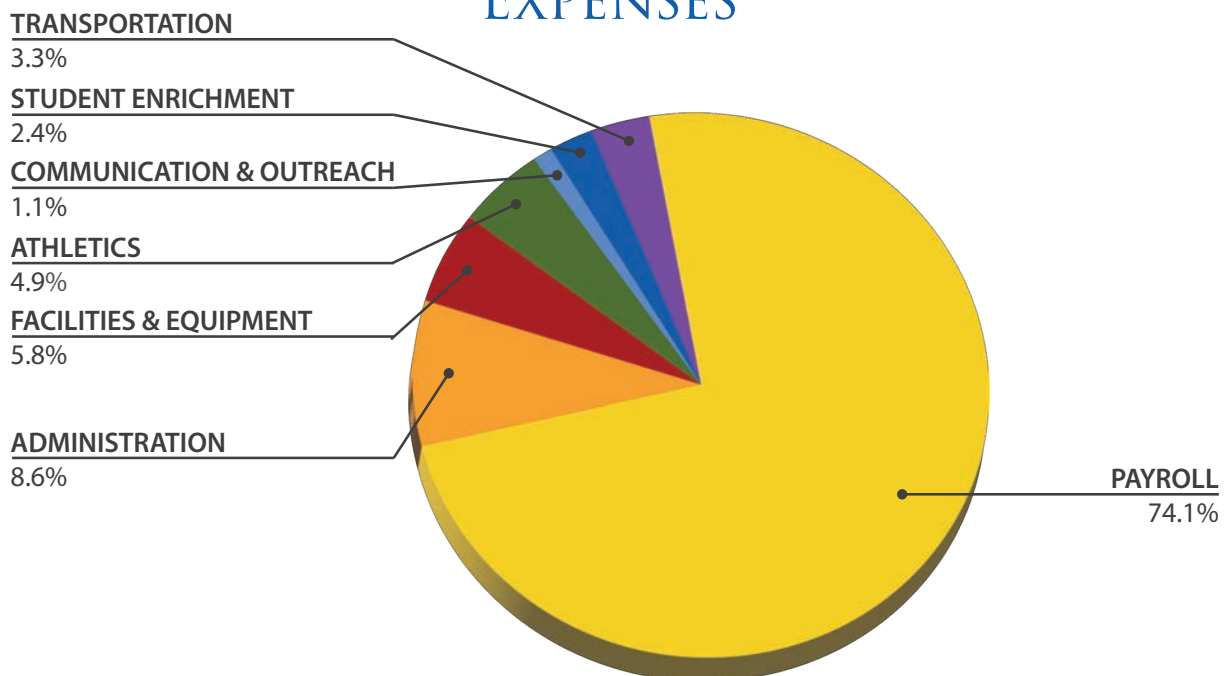
The community of OCA is very family oriented. It has an inviting feel. Happiness is seen. Leadership opportunities are present in so many ways...for the individual as well as for small groups and for the whole school. - Alumni Parent '21

2020 Financial Report

REVENUE



EXPENSES



Our Team

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Our Team

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Levi Baus.....	Dean of Houses, Drama, World History, Humane Letters, Latin
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Kim Nguyen.....	Algebra I, Geometry, Pre-Calculus
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Jonathan Shoulta.....	Humane Letters, Latin, Philosophy, Technology
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Alesia Schaefer.....	Admissions, Communications, Coach
Mary Beth Shields.....	Registrar, Development, Front Desk
Chris Teague.....	Faculty/Student Advisory
Don Thomas.....	Athletics
Susan Thornton, DSL.....	Business/HR Manager, Accreditation, Covid-19
Cody Vaught.....	Admissions Coordinator, Athletic Director, Coach
Kathy Webb.....	Bookkeeping

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