



March 2015 School Spotlight



Arizona has thousands of bright, curious children from all corners of the state and these children possess so much capability and potential talent, but they desperately need opportunities to reach their full potential. That is where St. John the Evangelist Catholic School in Tucson excels.

Teachers at the school remember when their students didn't need desks with cubbies—they had nothing to put in them. Unfortunately, today's economy has many schools struggling to keep their doors open, amid challenges that go beyond desk supplies. Further, the students that most need a quality education are typically those least able to financially help the school.

Principal Keiran Roche knew that his school served the state's poorest children and that he needed to find a new source of funding to enable his school not only to survive, but to thrive.

"Our students come from some of the most under-resourced families in the community, with 80 percent of our school's students qualifying for the National Free and Reduced Lunch Program," Roche said. "These families want the opportunity to choose the best education for their children, but they do not have the ability to self-pay. AAA Scholarships provide St. John the Evangelist with the chance to expand our student enrollment to students we otherwise wouldn't be able to serve."

From August 2013 to February 2014, St. John saw cumulative student growth of 68 months across 1st through 8th grades – 170 percent more learning than the expected 40 months of growth!

One hundred percent of the students attending St. John receive some form of financial aid in order to attend the school.

Students from the same community that would send them to failing schools are showing documented achievement. From August 2013 to February 2014, **St. John saw cumulative student growth of 68 months across 1st through 8th grades – 170 percent more learning than the expected 40 months of growth!** Making "Academic Achievement Accessible" is not only AAA Scholarship Foundation's name – it is our passion and goal and we are pleased that we are able to help St. John in closing the education achievement gap.

St. John has partnered with the Notre Dame ACE Academies (NDAA) to incorporate an innovative program that utilizes resources from the University, corporations, and the local community. The NDAA program encourages schools to increase the number of students enrolled through parental school choice scholarship programs, which has been a key to success for the Tucson area it serves – an area recently ranked the sixth poorest metropolitan



area by the US Census Bureau. St. John embraced this program and has increased their enrollment by more than 100 percent in five years, growing from 133 students in 2010 to 314 students today.

“We address the needs of the whole child in providing diverse approaches to learning,” Roche said. “Our AAA Scholarship students provide not only diversity, but also a stability of income through multiyear scholarships that we would not have otherwise. AAA Scholarships enables us to compete for students that otherwise would not have a choice in where to go to school. We appreciate

everything the AAA Scholarship Foundation and the generous donors have done for the many students they serve.”

About St. John the Evangelist Catholic

Established in 1950, St. John the Evangelist Catholic serves Pima County students in grades preschool through 8th grade. Maximizing the benefit of their partnership with Notre Dame ACE Academies, children experience the effects of a program focused on comprehensive school excellence and implementing a unique model of urban schooling. St. John students prepare for college by closing the education achievement gap, as shown by testing twice a year with the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. During the 2014-15 school year, St. John served 316 students, 116 of which were AAA scholarship recipients. The annual cost of tuition and fees at St. John for the 2014/15 school year is \$5,800 for grades Kindergarten through 8th, plus the cost of books and fees.

About AAA Scholarship Foundation

The typical AAA Scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. The average household income of families accepted to receive scholarships is \$23,559 for a family of four. Many children are either below grade level, failing at their previous school or both when they receive a scholarship. Parents, who find their children in these circumstances and care about their future, look for viable options. They seek an atmosphere that challenges their child to reverse inadequate learning and/or social patterns and the potential lifelong negative impact. They wish to change their child's learning environment, acquaintances, and the unfortunate predictable outcomes associated with school failure.

AAA Scholarships are funded in Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia and Pennsylvania by corporations that redirect a portion of their state tax liability to the AAA Scholarship Foundation in exchange for a tax credit (dollar for dollar in Alabama, Arizona, Florida and Georgia and up to 90 percent in Pennsylvania). The AAA Scholarship Foundation is one of the only approved Scholarship 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations exclusively serving qualifying low-income, disabled and/or displaced students through these Scholarship Tax Credit programs. AAA Scholarship Foundation provides your company with the convenience and efficiency of a single-solution for participating in multiple state tax credit scholarship programs. For more information or to learn how your corporation can participate in the program, visit www.AAAScholarships.org, or contact Kerri Vaughan at kerri@aaascholarships.org or 888 707-2465 ext. 730.