



ST. MARK'S
GUIDE TO
Grateful
GIVING

SCHOOL FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES



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GREETINGS

Hello from Deb Strainge and Alison Samarias

*D*ear Friends:

We are pleased to present the latest issue of *St. Mark's Guide to Grateful Giving* – your map to volunteering and fundraising at St. Mark's School. The guide provides information on our two major drives, the Annual Fund and the School Gala, and aims to answer commonly asked questions, such as...

Why do we need to fundraise? Unlike many private schools, tuition at St. Mark's covers the cost to educate each child. *We do not depend on fundraising to bridge a gap in the operating budget.* However, the budget does not cover all upgrades and enhancements that are essential to offering unique learning opportunities. We rely on your support to continue to offer the finest educational programs and to maintain our outstanding facilities.

When you give to St. Mark's, you help to provide the exceptional education and close community that has always made our school so special. And you help to accomplish our most important goal of *providing an academically enriched program in a nurturing Christian environment.*

Three fundamental ways you can support St. Mark's are:

- **Give to the Annual Fund**
- **Volunteer for the Parents' Association**
- **Support the School Auction**

Your tax-deductible contributions are a direct investment in your child's education and help keep tuition costs competitive, which is key to our mission as an Episcopal School. Please read the guide to learn more.

We are blessed with the opportunity to educate your children. Thank you for believing in St. Mark's School and helping us shape the leaders of tomorrow.

Deborah A. Strainge
Head of School

Alison Samarias
Director of Development

Hello from School Parent, LeeAnne LaBanz

*D*ear Friends and Fellow Parents:

My husband, Joe, and I have been fortunate to be members of the St. Mark's community for over ten years. Both of our sons started at St. Mark's when they were 3 and it has been pure joy watching them flourish ever since. While they are benefitting from strong academic and athletic programs, they are also learning what they care about, what is important to them, and who they want to be in the world. Teachers encourage them to think for themselves and to be the best they can be.

As a member of the School Advancement Committee, I support the idea to publish this guide to emphasize the importance of annual giving. It is essential for parents to understand why fundraising is vital to continuing the level of excellence our children benefit from. Making gifts to St. Mark's not only enhances the quality of education our children receive, but also helps to keep tuition costs down.

We are grateful to St. Mark's for providing our children with a nurturing environment and understand that paying tuition for private school is a big commitment. We also understand how important it is for us to teach our children about giving. Since they have seen first-hand the impact of gifts made to St. Mark's, they are learning about giving in a way that is meaningful.

We hope that you will find the *Guide to Grateful Giving* a helpful resource. Feel free to contact me with your questions or comments.

Whether you support the School by making financial contributions, serving on a committee, volunteering your time, or contributing in some other way, we thank you.

We are all in this together, and together, we will make sure our children continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

LeeAnne LaBanz
Parent of Will and Wesley

ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund is a yearly opportunity for parents, grandparents, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends to come together to voice their shared belief in the value of a St. Mark's education. The Annual Fund runs throughout the school's fiscal year of July 1 through June 30; however, the fall is a key time of year to support the drive. Contributions made by December 31 are eligible for current tax-year benefits. All gifts are 100% tax-deductible based on the school's 501 (c)(3) status.

The Annual Fund strengthens the St. Mark's experience: academics, grade level activities, physical activities and athletics, after school programs, field trips, art supplies, musical instruments, science and technology hardware and software, and professional development. Past proceeds have funded specialized faculty training for the advancement of S.T.E.A.M. programs, crucial upgrades to campus security, and a professional sound and lighting system for our performing arts program.

Every gift – large or small – counts! Participating in the Annual Fund sends a united message that our school community stands strong, and participation rates are important indicators of school loyalty and pride. **Thank you to every single donor who helps us achieve steady growth each year.** As we look to the future with bold ambition, we strive to equip our students and faculty with exceptional tools and methods necessary to learn, grow, collaborate, and innovate. St. Mark's relies on the generosity of so many to continue our legacy and support our School's mission. Annual Fund donors are recognized by *Circles of Giving* (not by donation amount) and are listed in *St. Mark's Annual Report*. **Please consider making St. Mark's your philanthropic priority.**

SCHOOL AUCTION



The School Auction, the major annual benefit for St. Mark's School, supports upgrades and enhancements that impact our students, faculty, and staff that are beyond the annual budget. This event provides an important yearly opportunity for parents and community members to come together to celebrate the many blessings we all share.

The Parents' Association, with support from the development and marketing staff, organizes the School Auction. Each year, we are thrilled to have a team of dedicated co-chairs who orchestrate a fun evening that offers something for everyone. Ticket information and event updates are published on the Auction website. To donate an auction item, place a program ad, or become a naming sponsor, please contact Alison Samarias at asamarias@stmarkspb.org.

St. Mark's parents step out to support the 2017-18 School Gala.

Past School fundraisers have raised money for the matching gift challenge that completed the campus redevelopment project, upgrades to advanced technology equipment, and the purchase of a new school bus.

Auction supporters are recognized on the Auction website, event signage, and in the event program. Contributors who support the Auction with donations valued at \$2,500 or more (not including the purchase of tickets) are recognized in *St. Mark's School's Annual Report*. Sponsorships and donations of ALL levels are enthusiastically encouraged.



'St. Mark's Goes Gatsby' 2016-17 Co-Chairs.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The goal of the Parents' Association is to create a positive and welcoming environment for all parents and provide an opportunity to work in partnership with the administration, faculty, and staff to support the mission, goals, and needs of the school. All parents and legal guardians of St. Mark's students are automatically members of the Parents' Association. Studies have proven that parental involvement in schools directly correlates with better grades, stronger social skills, and improved behavior in children.



Parent committee coordinators work in tandem with the administration and faculty to encourage structured parent involvement and volunteerism. The Parents' Association also plays an important role creating regular opportunities for parents to engage in the classroom. But it's not all work! St. Mark's parents have their fair share of fun!

Throughout the year, the Parents' Association plans special programs, events, educational coffees or evening talks, and social gatherings just for parents to provide an opportunity to meet and connect with other families.

St. Mark's parents give of themselves in a big way, contributing to the life of the School invaluable as volunteers, supporters, and ambassadors. Parent involvement is vital to maintaining the vibrancy of our community and helps to make this a special place for our students. Many of our most important events are parent-driven, so sharing your time and talents makes an invaluable difference to the entire school community. Here are some of the opportunities for parents to get involved:

- ☞ Volunteer Coffee and Uniform Exchange
- ☞ Annual School Auction
- ☞ PK and Lower School grade level events
- ☞ Middle School athletics, dances, and plant sales
- ☞ Kindergarten Grandparent Day
- ☞ Mommy-Son Hoedown (K-3rd boys)
- ☞ Daddy-Daughter Dance (K-3rd girls)
- ☞ Staff Appreciation events



Daddy-Daughter dancers show their flair in poodle skirts!



Lower School students enjoy the Book Fair staffed by PA volunteers.

We welcome all school moms, dads, and grandparents to serve as volunteers! Each school year, a *Willingness to Serve* form is distributed to school families outlining the many ways to volunteer. The school calendar, mobile app, website, and newsletters keep the St. Mark's community informed about the many exciting ways to participate. We look forward to seeing all school families on campus!



Co-Chairs shine bright at the annual PA fundraiser!

CORNERSTONE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



The mission of the Cornerstone Scholarship is to transform the lives of children in underserved neighborhoods in our local communities. Funds raised are applied to tuition and school related expenses, such as school books, uniforms, transportation, hot lunches, class trips, athletic gear, birthday parties, and additional costs as they may arise.

When a child is accepted into the Cornerstone program, St. Mark's is making a commitment to fund that child's education through the 8th grade. This multi-year commitment is funded not only by St. Mark's school families and church parishioners, but also by outside constituents. We actively seek to build partnerships in the greater community with individuals, organizations, and foundations who champion education so that Cornerstone can thrive well into the future. One of the most powerful ways to support the Cornerstone Scholarship is to make a gift to the school endowment fund – St. Mark's Lion Society. An endowed gift compounds over time, thus providing for the education of many children (read more about St. Mark's Endowment below). Events are also held each year to raise awareness about the Cornerstone program.

ST. MARK'S LION SOCIETY - SCHOOL ENDOWMENT FUND



St. Mark's School Endowment Fund, the Lion Society, allows gifts to grow in perpetuity and ensures a healthy future for the Cornerstone Scholarship program. Each year, 3% of proceeds from the school's two major fundraising drives, the Annual Fund and the Annual Auction, are designated to the endowment fund to promote steady growth. Donations and planned gifts of all sizes are graciously welcomed.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

Capital Campaigns are conducted periodically to provide significant funds for growth, such as construction and renovation of facilities and other special purposes. St. Mark's Church & School completed its *We Will! Build in Faith* Capital Campaign in 2015, where over \$10 million was raised to redevelop the campus and add multiple new facilities. The project involved four individual phases of construction over the course of five years. Several large gifts were crucial to the success of the campaign; however, thanks to the whole community rallying together with gifts of all sizes, we achieved our goal.

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

An individual initiative is a drive created to fill a specific need, as identified by the school administration, which requires funding beyond general fundraising. These needs can be enhancements to programs, staffing, and implementation expenses. The duration of an individual initiative generally runs for two years but can vary. St. Mark's *Innovation Initiative* was implemented in the 2017-2018 school year to advance the strategic goal of equipping students as 21st century learners in a culture of innovation and collaboration. To date, funds raised have been allocated for specialized STEM faculty training. The Media Center has been renovated for the 2019-2020 school year to include a new STEM SmartLab that encourages exploration, problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. The initiative is ongoing to ensure the future success of students in preschool through eighth grade.

SERVICE LEARNING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A principal component of a St. Mark's education – and a tradition that is evident throughout our church and school community – is the practice of seeking out those in need and offering our support. We honor this tradition through fundraisers that happen during the school year in an effort to sustain our cherished causes. The causes listed below represent some of the organizations that St. Mark's constituents support annually:



Middle Schoolers spend the day packing food for hungry children in Haiti.

- ∞ **Help for Hope** – collects money for Hope Rural School to provide students a chance to participate in an experiential, educational field trip
- ∞ **Hearts of Palm** – rehabilitates homes for those in need and offers temporary housing for those in transition
- ∞ **Food Packing for Haiti** – packs food for children in Haiti and offers students community service hours
- ∞ **Food for Families** – collects non-perishable food items for families in need during the Thanksgiving holiday

- ∞ **Adopt-A-Family** – collects and provides Christmas gifts for adopted families' wish lists
- ∞ **National Junior Honor Society Toy Drive** – collects Christmas toys for children and families in need
- ∞ **St. Mark's Church Annual Concert** – raises funds to support St. Mark's Church mission and ministries
- ∞ **Coins for Kenya** – supports the Mama Ada Foundation by underwriting tuition for students and seeds for farmers



Volunteers organize donations for hurricane victims.



St. Mark's students prepare meals for the homeless.

We thank our generous and caring families for answering the call of those less fortunate. Engaging in service work that directly impacts people's lives defines the heart of this community. These learning experiences help set St. Mark's students apart. We encourage all school families to continue supporting these important organizations. The gifts we offer to those in need nourishes us with the greatest gift of all – a giving heart and the ability to care for others.

2019-2020

ST. MARK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

St. Mark's welcomes all school families to be active participants in the life of our school and desires for everyone to feel a sense of belonging in the St. Mark's community. We invite new school parents in their first year at St. Mark's on through to our seasoned middle school parents and ambassadors to join in.

Throughout the school year, St. Mark's hosts multiple community events and fundraisers. Here is a list of dates that includes free fellowship events, school events which are often grade specific and require a nominal fee to attend, and fundraisers that span a variety of ticket prices and sponsorship levels:

Thursday, August 22, 2019

Volunteer Coffee & Uniform Exchange

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Gym Lobby & Youth/Fitness Rooms

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Thursday, September 19, 2019

40th Anniversary Family Celebration

6:00 p.m. | Coleman Hall

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Thursday, October 24, 2019

Jack-O'-Lantern Carving Night

6:00 p.m. | Coleman Hall

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Monday-Friday, October 28 - November 1, 2019

Book Fair

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | Staluppi Center Lobby

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Thursday, December 5, 2019

Christmas Tree Lighting

6:00 p.m. | Courtyard

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Tuesday, December 10, 2019

Seraphic Fire - Vocal Ensemble

6:30 p.m. | St. Mark's Church

All St. Mark's Families & Public Welcome

Saturday, February 1, 2020

Food Packing for Haiti

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Gymnasium

All St. Mark's Families & Public Welcome

Sunday, February 23, 2020

Family Fun Day—St. Mark's School Celebrating 40 Years

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. | St. Mark's Church & Robb Field

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Thursday, March 6, 2020

Mommy-Son Hoedown

6:00 p.m. | Embassy Suites PGA

St. Mark's School K - 3rd Grade Families

Friday, April 3, 2020

Daddy-Daughter Dance

6:30 p.m. | Embassy Suites PGA

St. Mark's School K - 3rd Grade Families

Saturday, April 25, 2020

Auction - Celebrating 40 Years at St. Mark's School

6:30 p.m. | The Pelican Club, Jupiter

All St. Mark's Families Welcome

Saturday, January 25, 2020

Cornerstone Scholarship Breakfast

9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. | Coleman Hall

All St. Mark's Families & Public Welcome

ST. MARK'S DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

St. Mark's Development Director manages and coordinates all school fundraising and works closely with the Head of School, CFO, and Director of Enrollment to identify and determine the school's annual fundraising needs. Together, this leadership team decides on annual fundraising themes and best approaches for integrating the school's vision into fundraising messages and marketing materials. The Development Office implements the annual drives and selects the most effective tools for marketing each one.

Alison Samarias, St. Mark's Development Director
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ST. MARK'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Cameo Rankin, Parents' Association President 2019-2020
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