

FUND A DREAM

**HELPS MAKE CATHOLIC EDUCATION
POSSIBLE FOR SOPHIE**



Scott and Janet Youmell are committed to a Catholic education for their three children. The oldest, Sara, is finishing her freshman year at Lake Catholic High School, while the younger children, Sophie and Lucas, are completing grades 8 and 4, respectively, at All Saints School. Sophie will attend Lake Catholic next year.

The family belongs to St. John Vianney Parish in Mentor. Sophie is the recipient of a \$2,500 Fund A Dream scholarship, which the Youmells said helps ease the cost of the three Catholic school tuitions they face each year.

Fund A Dream is an innovative initiative developed by the Catholic Community Foundation of the Diocese of Cleveland that offers a special opportunity for donors to adopt a student attending a Catholic school in the diocese.

**STORY AND
PHOTO BY
CAROL KOVACH**

Fund A Dream sponsors interact with their student(s) during the school year by receiving:

- The first name, grade level and school name of their student(s)
- An invitation to a school Mass
- Comprehensive progress report(s) on their student(s)
- Personal communication from student(s)

Fund A Dream sponsors have provided tuition assistance for more than 750 students since the program's inception in 2020, including 237 students from 60 schools who received Fund A Dream scholarships for the 2024-2025 school year.

"When we were going through our pre-marriage interviews, we were both on the same page about wanting our children to get a Catholic school education," Janet said. She grew up in nearby Concord and was educated in public schools.

Scott, however, attended Catholic schools through college.

"It was a no-brainer for me," he said, of the desire to send his children to a Catholic school. "My three siblings and I all went to Catholic grade schools and Lake Catholic." He also attended the University of Dayton (a Marianist college) and graduated from John Carroll University (a Jesuit college).

"My aunt taught at All Saints School for more than 20 years," he said. After she died in 2004, his parents established a scholarship in her name at All Saints.

His family also was among the first families at St. John Vianney Parish when it was established in 1969 and their son Lucas is the recipient of a scholarship at All Saints for founding families of the parish.

The family is deeply involved with the parish, which is ingrained in their lives, Scott said.

"These scholarships are making Catholic schools more affordable," Janet said.



Scott said St. John Vianney made an effort to educate families about the various scholarships that were available to Catholic school families and encouraged them to apply. "We applied for everything," he added.

"I give St. John Vianney credit for being ahead of this," he said, of the parish's effort to encourage families to seek tuition assistance. "It is a privilege, not a right, to get a scholarship or grant and we are very grateful to our donors."

The Youmells know their donors, Joe and Sue Manning, who also are longtime St. John Vianney parishioners and advocates for Catholic education.

"It is so exciting to be able to play a small role in helping a child to gain a Catholic education," Joe said. "We know the grandparents of the child we are sponsoring (Sophie)."

Joe said his five children attended Catholic grade school and high school. "They made great friends."

He also credits Catholic schools with establishing a good foundation for children, which is one reason why he and his wife decided to become Fund A Dream donors. "I am saddened to see families who might be interested in a Catholic education for their children but may not be able to provide it. We are blessed and feel it's important to give back."

Sophie expressed her gratitude to the Mannings for their support and said she appreciates the opportunity to attend All Saints School. "It's a good place to be. We're surrounded by good people and can learn about our faith in religion class. The students in public schools have to learn about their faith elsewhere. We have it integrated into all of our classes."

She's involved in CYO sports, playing volleyball and basketball, and she also volunteers for the parish and school. Sophie said she was blessed to be confirmed by Bishop Edward Malesic in April.

"We are extremely appreciative for All Saints and for our donors," Scott said. "There is a value in attending a Catholic school and our plan is to pay it forward when our children are finished with their education. We want to help others to get the benefit we received." †



LEARN MORE

Contact Fred Roberts at 216.696.6525, Ext. 3310, froberts@catholiccommunity.org, or visit catholiccommunity.org/dream.



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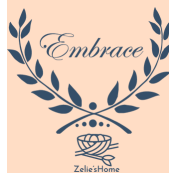
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