

All Saints' Historic Groundbreaking Recap



"Cheer, Cheer for ASCS. We're not the biggest but we're the best. We work hard and keep our heads high. Giving our all to reach for the sky. Whether the odds be great or small, ASCS will rise to the call..."

Students from Jr-K through 8th grade triumphantly roared the words of the All Saints spirit song to celebrate the groundbreaking of school renovations, 50+ years in the making.

On our feast day, All Saints Day, Friday, November 1st, 2019, Master of Ceremonies Student Government President, Shanetonio Martin opened the celebration by welcoming and thanking his school mates, honorary speakers, teachers, parents, donors and guests to All Saints Catholic School.

When All Saints was constructed 50+ years ago, its design allowed for easy future expansion to occur by converting the carport into finished rooms. Finally, *the future is now!*



"It did not take long to realize that the plans from 1967 were to close this area in as soon as possible," explained Ken Soistman, President of All Saints. "But it was always in the fifth year of our next five-year plan. Meanwhile we started adding high school credit classes for some of our 8th graders and found that we did not have the space for those classes. Art and Music were on a cart! We just wanted to offer our students the facilities that other Catholic schools have. "



Poised with a million-dollar matching gift from Weinstein Properties, All Saints will revitalize its physical space by adding 6,800 square feet of learning and administrative space and configuring current areas to their best use. This expansion, which will allow All Saints to continue to provide students with all the tools they need to excel in high school and beyond, totals \$2.3M and has a prospective completion date of fall of 2020.

"Mr. Weinstein was no

stranger to All Saints as he was helping a number of less fortunate students with tuition assistance; also fulfilling "wish lists" for technology and other projects, "exclaimed an emotional Soistman, "Then came a day when we were talking to Mr. Weinstein about the space problem and Mr. Weinstein asked about the carport and what would it cost to close in the area. I told him I thought around \$2M and he said, 'Ken you got your first million.' THIS IS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR ME! We are so blessed at All Saints with people like Mr. Weinstein, Bishop Knestout and the entire Pastoral Center staff, our donors, All Saints staff, parents, students and friends. Thank you everyone."



The morning began inside the school with a Mass celebrated by The Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, Bishop of Richmond and Father Gino Rossi, All Saints School Chaplain, Father Shay Auerbach, Pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church; and Father Michael Boehling, the Vicar General of the Diocese. Mass was followed by the All Souls Day/El Dia de Los Muertos presentation, an annual school tradition where loved ones who have passed are honored. Soon, the small gym, now substituting as a church, was filled with the joyous young voices of the school choir.





All then moved to the carport area for the groundbreaking ceremony. Speaking as a parent, Dr. Susan Williams, Advisory School Board Chair could not contain her joy, "This is more than an addition. It builds the foundation for academic growth, enhances their faith, and provides the space to learn and grow as global citizens."

Jacob White, kindergarten and Ceci Flores, grade 3 recited excerpts from a beautiful poem written by first grade teacher Mrs. Mary Davison and alumnae, Mackenzie Jaquez, that captures the spirit of the school.

*All Saints is a place where we like to have fun
We slide and we swing in the bright shining sun.
Or we walk and can talk and be happy and free
Enjoying each moment that God lets us see.
That our school helps us grow into children so kind,
Every day, working hard to strengthen our mind.
All Saints, it is time. We are starting anew
And that is our future, it begins with you!"*

With great passion, John Tucker, Board member and campaign chair, spoke from the heart, "I want to speak directly to the students of All Saints. You may not realize it now, but what you are witnessing today is exceptional. Since the doors of this building were opened in 1967, one-half of the Catholic schools in this country have closed, including many within cities. But we are not closing. On the contrary, we are building, we are expanding, we are growing... You walk the halls of an exceptional school, you are led by an exceptional administration, faculty and staff. I have every confidence, belief, and expectation that each and every one of you will do exceptional things and will lead exceptional lives. May God bless you..."



Thanks to the generosity of Weinstein Properties and many other donors, \$1,866,000 has been contributed to All Saints' The Future is Now \$2.3 million campaign. All Saints must raise the remaining \$445,000 by June 30, 2020 to fully fund this project. Please help us meet our goal by contributing to the campaign today!



Find out more at allsaintsric.org/support/donate/ or contact Alyssa McBride, Director of Development & Marketing @ amcbride@allsaintsric.org or 804.329.7524.

To see more photos from the celebration, click [HERE](#).