

**FIRSTGen** *at Saint John's University:*

**The Cristo Rey Scholarship Fund**



**CRISTO REY JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL**

**Transforming the Lives of Young Men  
at Saint John's University**

## America is Losing the Potential of its Young Men

Imagine you're an 18-year-old living in one of America's poorer communities. You exude potential and desire to attend college, graduate, gain a rewarding career, contribute to the community and raise children who make achieving the American dream a family tradition.

Tragically, many high-potential young men in such circumstances hear this . . .

*“Forget college, your dreams and your ambitions.  
You are segregated to poverty and inequality that will continue for you, your children and beyond.”*



Today fewer men graduate from college than women – a U.S. first and a rising, disturbing trend. This educational gender gap widens considerably for young men from low-income families.

America **cannot thrive** with only half our population educated and young men from low-income families shut out of college – the door-opener to economic and social vitality.

### THE COLLEGE GENDER GAP

**1970** = Men comprise 58% of college students. **Today** = Men comprise 43% of college students.

About **82 percent of high school graduates** from high-income families enroll in college, compared to **52 percent of graduates** from low-income families.

Source: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12\\_236.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_236.asp)



## Despair— A Destructive Cycle We Can and Must Break

Ambitious, skilled teenagers from low-income families often find college and its pathway to a better life a fantasy.

Too often, **economic and social despair results**, continuing a destructive cycle of poverty, segregation, lost potential, and social and civic degradation.

**By virtually every measurement** of economic, career and social well-being, college graduates **dramatically outperform** their peers with less education.

*That is America's history, present and future.*



### LOST OPPORTUNITY

More than 111,000 African-American and Latino students annually graduate in the top half of their high school class but do not earn either a two-year or four-year degree within eight years.

*Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2013*



## A Door-Opener for Today's Young Men and U.S. Success

The G.I. bill made college a reality for thousands of first-generation college students—World War II's veterans. **America prospered.**

While Millennials—those born from 1981 to 1997—are far from World War II, **the tremendous benefits of a college education** remain:

- Millennial college graduates working full-time **earn about \$17,500 more annually than employed young adults with only a high school diploma.** This pay gap was much smaller in previous generations.
- College-educated Millennials **are more likely (86% vs. 57%) than those with a high school diploma or less to say their job is a career or a steppingstone to a career, and their unemployment rate (3.8% vs. 12.2%) is dramatically lower.**
- **89% of Millennials with at least a bachelor's degree say college already paid off or will pay off in the future.**

But this is about much more than money . . .

Source: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/02/11/the-rising-cost-of-not-going-to-college/>



## Fostering Human Dignity and The Common Good

**American society benefits** from college graduates. Compared to peers without a college education, college graduates have:

- **Higher** volunteering and charitable giving rates.
- **Higher** voting rates.
- **Higher** participation in school, community, service, civic and religious organizations.
- **Higher** levels of community involvement.
- **Higher** neighborhood interactions and trust levels.
- **Lower** use of government expenditures.
- **Lower** poverty rates.

*Source: Education Pays: 2013, The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society, College Board*



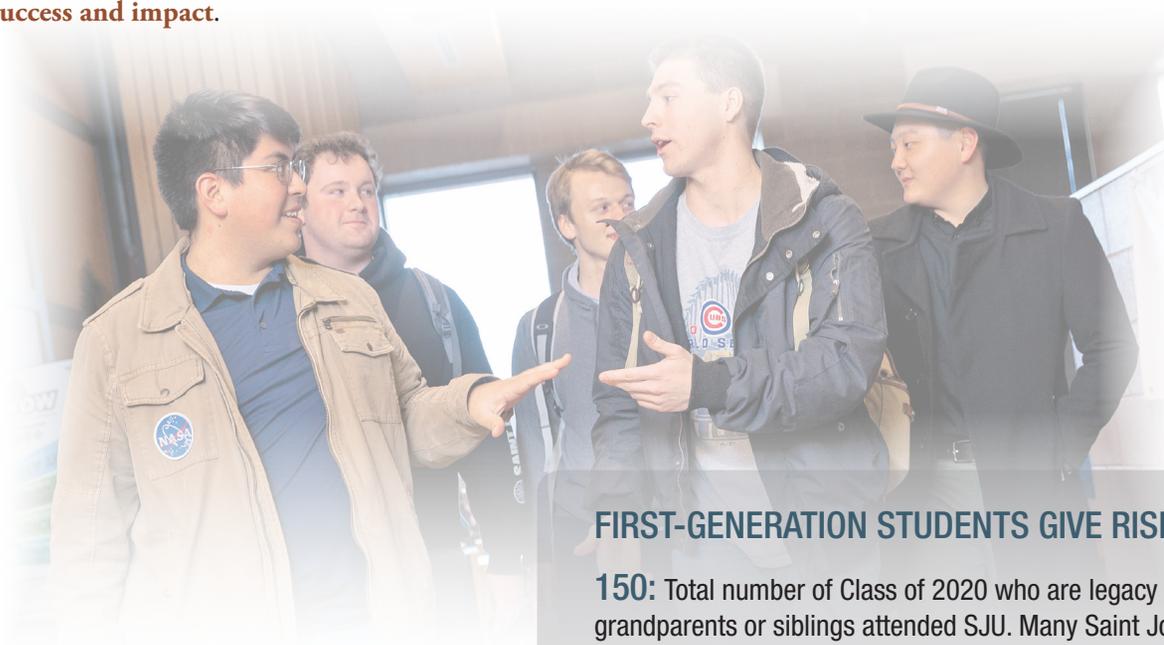
## Saint John's—A Tradition of First-Generation Success

Since its founding in 1857, Saint John's University has **dedicated itself to educating first-generation male college students**. Today nearly a third of our students are first-generation students.

Benedictine monks at Saint John's began educating Minnesota's early immigrants. Saint John's later attracted first-generation students from rural and urban areas around the world, including the Bahamas, Bosnia, Japan, Puerto Rico and Somalia.

First-generation Johnnies include entrepreneurs, public servants, physicians, educators, scientists, clergy, and many other vocations.

Through their children and community commitment, **a first-generation graduate from Saint John's fosters multi-generation success and impact**.



### FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS GIVE RISE TO LEGACY STUDENTS

**150:** Total number of Class of 2020 who are legacy students, meaning their parents, grandparents or siblings attended SJU. Many Saint John's legacy students follow a path in which their relatives were first-generation college graduates from SJU.



## Saint John's—Specializing in Educating Young Men

Saint John's University and its sister college, the College of Saint Benedict, have a collaborative relationship unique in American higher education.

Each school, which **ranks among the country's best liberal arts colleges**, provides a single-sex residential experience combined with coeducational classes and programming to **meet the unique developmental needs of young men** and women intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually.

Combining support of excellent faculty, a strong community and high-quality campus facilities leads to the following results:

- **90%** of CSB/SJU graduates finish in four years or less;
- **94%** of CSB/SJU students complete an internship, undergraduate research, practicum or other career-related experience;
- **97%** of CSB/SJU alums rate their college experience as good or excellent;
- **99%** of CSB/SJU graduates are employed, continuing their education or engaged in a full-time volunteer program within one year of graduation;
- **More than 100 companies** visit campus each year to interview CSB/SJU students for internships and permanent positions.

Many publications rank CSB/SJU among the best liberal arts colleges in the country for academics, career preparation and affordability, including:



## One-of-a-Kind Community Fosters Young Men's Success

**Saint John's is a place like no other. Here young men discover themselves, and nourish and advance their potential.**

Located 90 miles west of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Saint John's is one of **the country's most beautiful campuses**. Its 2,700 acres—designated as the Saint John's Arboretum—include wetlands, lakes, an oak savanna, a restored prairie and hiking trails that wind through an extensive pine and hardwood forest.

**Nearly all students live on campus**, enjoying a vibrant community atmosphere for personal growth and discovery, **which is an essential part of the Saint John's education and young men's growth**. The Faculty Resident Program is a distinctive part of campus life whereby Benedictine professors and administrators live in the residence areas and serve as adult mentors.

Anchored by Saint John's Abbey, **the Saint John's community lives timeless Benedictine values that foster first-generation success**, including hospitality, lifelong learning, listening, stability and stewardship.



## Enduring Impact of Saint John's on Young Men

Students and alumni **do not view** Saint John's as simply a physical place or a means to an end.

Rather, they perceive it and experience it as *home*: a place deeply rooted in the **Benedictine values of stability and community**.

These values are a scaffolding for their lives after college, an arc of values that help define their friendships, their family lives, their professional lives and their citizenship.

Saint John's becomes an **ethical touchstone** throughout their lives.

Through the lens of **community**, and upon our **Catholic, Benedictine foundation**, Saint John's holistic educational approach helps men fully develop—*mind, body and spirit*.

Saint John's instills in young men the values and aspiration to **lead lives of significance and achievement, to be about something bigger than themselves**.

This life changing experience **improves** lives today, future lives, communities and society.  
**It turns first-generation into multi-generational success.**



## The Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Network and Saint John's

The Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Network, which Saint John's became a partner of in 2009, is a college preparatory program serving primarily Latino, inner-city students. **The program currently has 35 high schools across the country.** It instills in its students and parents the importance of a college education. Cristo Rey students who come to Saint John's are well prepared for the academic rigor of our liberal arts curriculum.



## Partner Schools Relationships

Currently, Saint John's enrolls more than 35 students from Cristo Rey high schools, including schools in Los Angeles, Denver, Minneapolis, New York, Dallas, Houston, Portland and Lawrence, Mass. Among our most successful Cristo Rey relationships is our partnership with Verbum Dei High School in Los Angeles.



### VERBUM DEI HIGH SCHOOL, LOS ANGELES

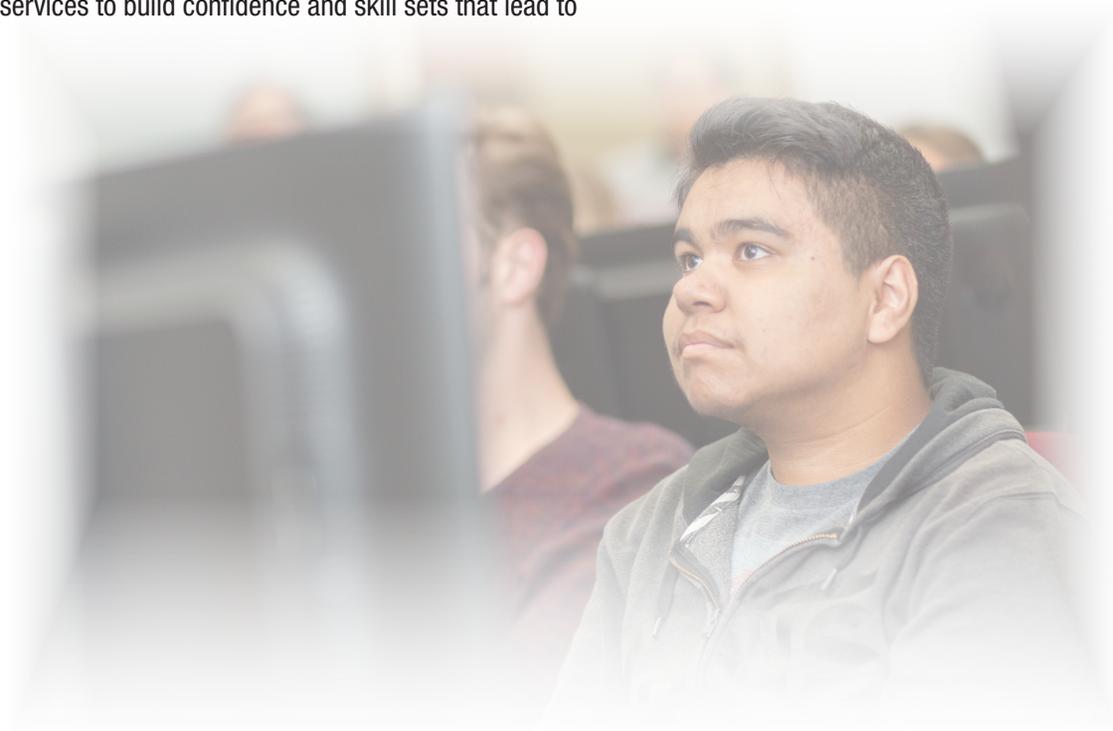
The first Verbum Dei students came to Saint John's in 2007. As the photo indicates, Verbum Dei continues to be well represented at Saint John's.



## FirstGen at Saint John's: A Three-Pronged Approach

Saint John's approach to recruiting, educating and preparing First-Generation students for success at Saint John's and beyond includes the following:

- **First**, we identify and recruit first-generation students who are most likely to flourish at Saint John's. We have developed partnerships with the Cristo Rey Network across the country. Working closely with their guidance counselors, the students and their families, we draw students who are best suited for the educational experience Saint John's has to offer.
- **Second**, we provide the financial aid necessary for academically qualified, low-income first-generation college students. We are determined to build the scholarship endowment that will allow these students to graduate with minimal or no debt.
- **Third**, we provide academic and support services to build confidence and skill sets that lead to graduation and success after college.



## How Can You Help?

Saint John's seeks donors who care about the future of a generation of young men and who believe in the transformative power of a Saint John's education. These are the ways you can make an impact on the Cristo Rey students coming to Saint John's:

- Become a partial or full sponsor of a Cristo Rey student at Saint John's University
- Establish an endowed scholarship for students from the Cristo Rey Network
- Endow a scholarship for young men from a particular Cristo Rey school, tailoring your support to help a particular community of students



Help transform lives through the  
Cristo Rey Scholarship Fund and other  
Saint John's FirstGen initiatives by  
contacting Fr. Eric Hollas, OSB,  
at **[EHollas@csbsju.edu](mailto:EHollas@csbsju.edu)** or **320-363-3961**.



Saint John's