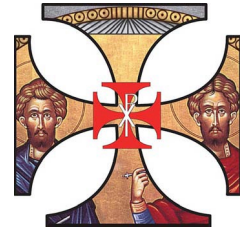


National Philoptochos Society 2014-2016 Committee Report



Saint Basil Academy

Co-Chairs: Joanne Stavrakas and Kali Tsitsipas

Liaison: Evangeline Mekras Scurtis

*Members: Helen Carnegis Georgia Kaloidis
Elaine Cladis Christine Karavites
Eleni Constantinides Betty Lantz
Bessie Drogaris Aspasia Melis
Stella Fiorentino Joanne Mitchell
Joanne Kakoyiannis Evellyn Tsiadis*

Saint Basil Academy is one of the most important and beloved ministries of the National Philoptochos Society, celebrating its 72nd Anniversary this year. The Saint Basil Academy committee is appointed by President Maria Logus and works closely with the Executive Director of Saint Basil Academy, Reverend Fr. Constantine L. Sitaras, to determine the specific needs of the Academy.

For 72 years, Saint Basil Academy has provided a loving and safe environment, quality education and religious life for all Orthodox children as a licensed residential child-care institution in America. The Academy focuses on the total child, spiritually and emotionally, addressing their needs and nurturing them into adulthood.

The Academy is under the guidance of the Archdiocese, and Philoptochos is the land owner of the property and buildings. Chapters throughout the country assist with their commitments from Vasilopita and the Sisterhood for the maintenance of the entire facility, salaries, and most importantly, the care of precious lives. The Sisterhood Fund provides for the ongoing needs for the children of the Academy and graduation expenses. During 2014, National Philoptochos contributed \$371,950 to Saint Basil Academy for both the Vasilopita and Sisterhood Funds. Over the past 10 years, contributions total approximately \$4 million.

The Zoe Cavalaris Fund provides for tutors in the Learning Center for the continued academic success of the children and scholarships for the high school students planning to attend college.

Currently there are 21 children residing in a safe environment, participating in extracurricular activities including baseball, soccer, basketball and chorus. Their smiles will brighten a room, while the family histories and reasons for being at Saint Basil Academy will tear at your heart. Each child is treated as an individual, abilities are examined and appropriate programs are structured for each child. The children are amazing and astound us with their strong desire to strive for excellence academically and in extracurricular activities.

During Vasilopita celebrations, children from the Academy have visited cities in Houston, Denver and east coast cities, speaking as “ambassadors” and informing parishes about their “home,” the Saint Basil Academy. Some children return to their families for holidays, spring break and summer; others stay with host families.

Graduating in June 2016 are Thomas from college, Alexandra and Sofia from high school, Zachary and Izolda from elementary school.

The Bridge Program is thriving and provides an extended home for those children who continue to live at the Academy and continue their education after high school graduation. This program provides a healthy and supportive environment that prepares young people to make the transition from adolescence to adulthood. It helps them to develop the skills and self-esteem needed to successfully work and live independently.

We encourage every steward of Philoptochos to visit the Academy to witness and be a part of the lives of the children, seeing firsthand the "Miracles on the Hudson," our children of Saint Basil Academy. The website of the Academy has a plethora of information that includes the SBA Fact Sheet, the SBA Brochure, Referral Brochure and the Student Application, all that can be down-loaded and duplicated for use by the Philoptochos chapter and Parish Priest to raise awareness and to refer children.

As our beloved Archbishop Demetrios often states: *"If we save one child, then it is all worth it."*