

The Michael G. Santangelo Jr. Scholarship Fund

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THE MICHAEL G. SANTANGELO JR.
SCHOLARSHIP FUND****



**2023 ELEVENTH ANNUAL
DINNER, SILENT AUCTION & FUNDRAISER**

***“Helping young people reach their highest
potential, one student at a time.”***

*The MGS Jr. Scholarship Fund is a 501(c) (3) Corporation.

A Special Thank You

I would be remiss if I didn't start this "Thank You" letter without expressing my deepest gratitude to all of the donors and friends who have helped me survive throughout each of the events. Not a day goes by when I don't think of Michael Jr., but I truly believe that he is here with us, through our amazing students. The 2023 eleventh annual Michael G. Santangelo, Jr. Scholarship Fundraiser was the most successful to date; not only in terms of fundraising and an overflow of attendance, but in the raw emotion everyone experienced as a result of the speeches given by the students. At the event, I recognized everyone who has played an integral part in keeping Michael's spirit alive. It truly felt as if Michael Jr. was in the room that evening, laughing and clowning around with all those in attendance.

On December 6, 2023, the night of the event held at Alex's Bar & Grille, the evening began with Vincent O'Connell, who spent five years in the infantry and twenty-one years in the Army Reserve, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance and subsequently, those in attendance were treated to the playing of the Star Spangled Banner (the Whitney Houston version) and God Bless America by Ray Charles. Father Mark Connell led us in three prayers, the first for Michael Jr. and Claire McKenna, who passed at 26 years old (and who we promised would remain part of the Foundation for as long as we exist), second, a prayer for all of our friends and colleagues who had recently departed and third, for Israel and Mideast peace.

The Foundation awarded a scholarship to San Miguel Academy of Newburgh ("San Miguel"), in the amount of \$35,000.00, and this year marked the first year that three Santangelo scholars from San Miguel Academy graduated from a private High School on a scholarship and are now attending college. Those in attendance heard from Ms. Ravin Radigan on behalf of Student Sponsor Partners ("SSP"), and the Foundation increased the scholarship awarded to SSP to \$30,000.00 in Michael Jr's name. The Foundation also heard from the first freshman to speak at the event, Ms. Geraldine Waife, a freshman attending Ursuline High School, who amazed everyone with

her poise and maturity. The Foundation then heard from Ms. Catherine McCarthy on behalf of Ursuline High School and increased the scholarship to Ursuline to \$7,500.00, to be used to enable a student attending St. Ignatius in Hunts Point, Bronx, New York, to attend Ursuline High School. Finally, the Foundation increased its scholarship to \$7,500.00 to the Hill School located in Middleburg, Virginia, to be awarded to a disadvantaged student to attend a private High School in Virginia.

The Foundation is extremely proud of the thirteen (13) “Santangelo Scholars” that have graduated high school on a scholarship awarded by the Foundation and the Foundation presently has fifteen (15) students who are currently attending a private high school on a scholarship, or a total of **twenty-eight** students that your contributions have assisted in affording them a quality education. I am extremely proud to announce that the Foundation reached a milestone this year, having awarded in excess of one-half a million dollars (\$530,000.00) in scholarships since its inception in 2013. This year, the Foundation raised \$151,567.31 in donations, an amount that speaks to the momentum we have gathered each and every year.

The Honorable Jeanine Pirro spoke of personal experiences she had with Michael Jr., spoke passionately of the importance of students being able to obtain a private education, and acknowledged how the Foundation has given the students a chance to thrive.

The students who spoke, expressed their gratitude for being afforded the opportunity to attend a private high school. We were treated to speeches from five of our esteemed high-school graduates, Mr. Barut LaBastida (SUNY Maritime), Ms. MiAngel Reynolds (Delaware State University), Ms. Hayven Green (University of Pittsburgh), Ms. Andrea Milton (entrepreneur) and Mr. Tyler Roche (Georgia State University). Each of our graduates gave an inspiring speech and conveyed to the audience how much he or she had grown over their four years of private high school. To attempt to convey how heartfelt these speeches were would do them an injustice; I invite each of you to view their unique and inspiring speeches on our website. We

are so proud of all of the “Santangelo Scholars” and consider each of them to be a part of our family.

Anthony Ricciardi, a long-time member of the Board of Directors, a Platinum Donor and a real estate developer who has become an actor and director, having written and starred in the award winning movie “Fraudulent Conversion,” conveyed to the students the importance of reaching for their passion. The event concluded, as usual, with a most inspiring speech from the Honorable Lewis Lubell. Justice Lubell continues to outdo himself each year. You will soon be receiving our annual report which will contain portions of each student’s speeches.

The event once again helped to demonstrate first-hand to each person in attendance the profound effect that their donation has in helping each student reach for the stars. Many of the students who spoke told those in attendance that they would have had little hope but for the fact that they were able to attend an excellent private high school. None of this could have happened without the support of each one of you and Michael’s legacy lives on through each of these students. I am so humbled by the accomplishments of the Michael G. Santangelo Jr. Scholarship Fund. I am sure Michael is looking down on all of us and smiling.

Incredibly, next year will be the twelfth year of the Event.

Finally, we invite you to visit our website located at <http://michaelfund.org/>, where you can see photographs from past events and photographs and a complete videotape of the entire event, as well as the speeches from the 2023 event.

Forever grateful,

Michael G. Santangelo
President

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2023 Goal: \$100,000.00

Raised to Date: \$151,567.31