



*A Year of Challenges ...  
A Year of Blessings*

2020 Annual Report



## Dear Friends of Thomas Aquinas College,

June 30 marked the close of a remarkable fiscal year at Thomas Aquinas College. In August of 2019 we opened the doors to our newly acquired New England campus, welcoming students for the inaugural year at TAC, New England. Although the year began as expected, in mid-March we pivoted to online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these difficulties, however, and because of your generosity, the College continues to operate and flourish.

The following Annual Report will give you insights into how Thomas Aquinas College has stepped up to the challenge. It will lead you through details of how we addressed COVID-19, the effects of the pandemic on campus life, how we successfully re-opened for in-person classes, as well as achievements such as opening our New England campus and the groundbreaking of the Pope St. John Paul II Athletic Center in California.

Meanwhile, our alumni continue to renew the face of the earth in their daily lives:

- Katie Ellefson ('16), Joanna Kaiser ('15), and Annamaria Masteller ('16) finished their nursing programs just in time to aid those afflicted with COVID-19.
- Ken May ('03) published his book titled *The Art of Hacking: Ancient Wisdom for Cybersecurity Defense*, drawing on classical philosophy to protect modern data.
- Rev. Mr. Ryan Truss ('16), Rev. Mr. David Allen ('10), and Br. Matthew Maxwell ('08) were ordained to the transitional diaconate and Br. Sean Paul Wood ('13) and Br. Faustino (Sebastian) Lemmon ('14) made their first professions.
- Rev. Sebastian Walshe, O.Praem. ('94), published two books, one on the parables of Jesus and the other on the Sacrament of Matrimony.
- Will Bertain ('13) was appointed assistant headmaster at St. Jerome Institute, a newly opened classical high school in Washington, D.C.

These stories only hint at the progress Thomas Aquinas College has achieved in the past fiscal year, and I urge you to review the following Annual Report and the [attached financial statements](#) to see a more thorough account. The report will lead you through some of the milestones of the past year, such as alumni news and student activities, while the financial statements go into greater detail, showing our balanced budget, adequate cash flow, and successful fundraising efforts.

This year's prosperity was possible only because of your generosity. Thank you for your support of Thomas Aquinas College.

You remain in our prayers daily.

God bless,

Michael F. McLean, Ph.D.  
President

# TAC in the News

## Alumnae Nurses Tackle COVID-19



**NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER**

### These College Grads Are Saving Lives

The work of these graduates and so many others is a great blessing and inspiration, and it reflects well on the faithful Catholic education that they received.

*Patrick Reilly | Blogs | May 29, 2020*

Light shines bright in the darkness! One highlight among the COVID doldrums has been the heroism of so many Catholics and others in our nation's hospitals and doctor's offices.

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

## George Weigel calls Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel the "Most Important U.S. Catholic Building Erected in the 21st Century"



**FIRST THINGS**

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### THE CLERISY OF THE CONCRETE-AND-GLASS BOX BREAKS OUT

*by George Weigel*  
3 · 4 · 20

Several years back, the estimable Father Paul Scalia observed, of some cultural idiosyncy or other, "Who knew the end of civilization would be so amusing?"

I detected a subtle theological point within that mordant comment: a

## Cardinal Newman Society Interviews Dean Goyette



**THE CARDINAL NEWMAN SOCIETY**  
Promoting and Defending Faithful Catholic Education

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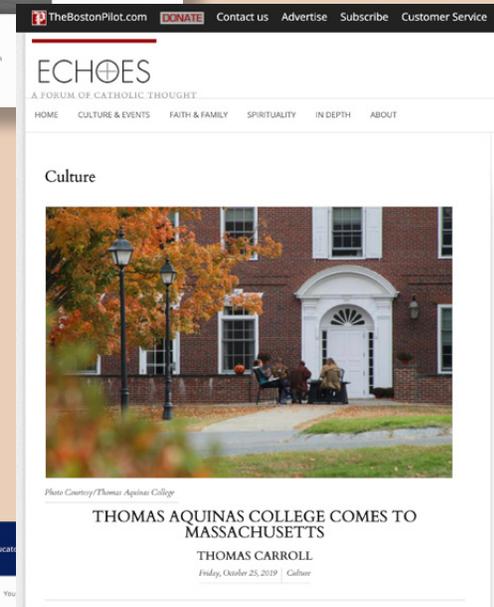
### Academic Program Sets Us Apart, Says Thomas Aquinas College Dean

March 3, 2020 / in Blog Newman Guide Articles / by Newman Society Staff

It's an exciting time at Thomas Aquinas College, which is recommended in The Newman Guide for its strong Catholic identity, with more students than ever benefiting from the faithful Catholic education provided by the College. The Santa Paula, Calif., campus reached full enrollment several years ago, but now TAC's Northfield, Mass., campus allows for the College's highest total enrollment ever.

The addition of the new campus has inspired several other developments, including a new motto for the College. The Newman Society recently asked Dr. John Goyette, dean of TAC, to discuss the motto and how it reflects the type of education that students receive.

Newman Society: What is the meaning behind the College's new motto, *Fides Quaerens Veritatem* "Faith Seeking Understanding"? How does it relate to the College's patron, St. Thomas Aquinas?



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### ECHOES

A FORUM OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT

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#### Culture



*Photo Courtesy/Thomas Aquinas College*

### THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE COMES TO MASSACHUSETTS

THOMAS CARROLL  
*Friday, October 25, 2019 | Culture*

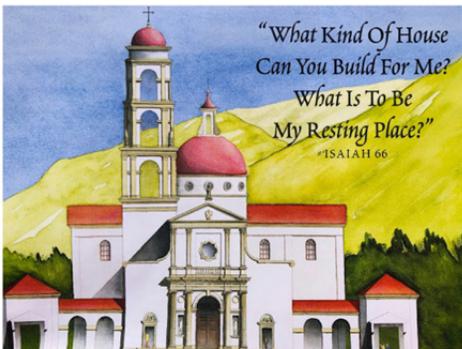
## Liturgical Arts Journal

HOME VESTMENTS SACRED MUSIC LITURGICAL BOOKS PAINTING WOODWORK SCULPTURE ARCHITECTURE

Home » Architecture » Thomas Aquinas College Chapel: A Triumph in Church Architecture

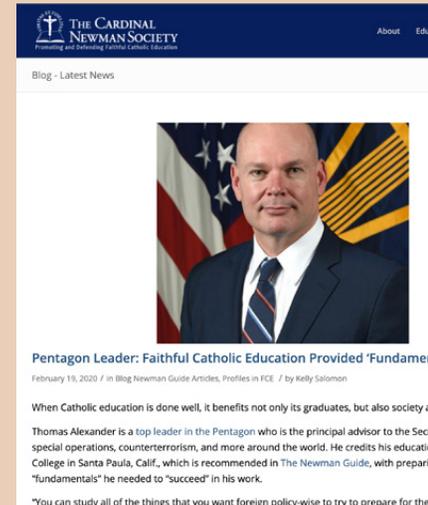
### Thomas Aquinas College Chapel: A Triumph in Church Architecture

by John Paul Sonnen | on June 23, 2020 |



*"What Kind Of House Can You Build For Me? What Is To Be My Resting Place?" -ISAIAH 66*

## The Fundamentals to Succeed



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### Pentagon Leader: Faithful Catholic Education Provided 'Fundamentals to Succeed'

February 19, 2020 / in Blog Newman Guide Articles, Profiles in FCE / by Kelly Salomon

When Catholic education is done well, it benefits not only its graduates, but also society at large.

Thomas Alexander is a top leader in the Pentagon who is the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on special operations, counterterrorism, and more around the world. He credits his education at Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, Calif., which is recommended in The Newman Guide, with preparing him with the "fundamentals" he needed to "succeed" in his work.

"You can study all of the things that you want foreign policy-wise to try to prepare for these types of positions,"

"As an educator, I can assure you that what Thomas Aquinas College offers few colleges promise or fulfill."

"A blueprint vision for the future of tomorrow's Catholic church architecture"

# Pandemic

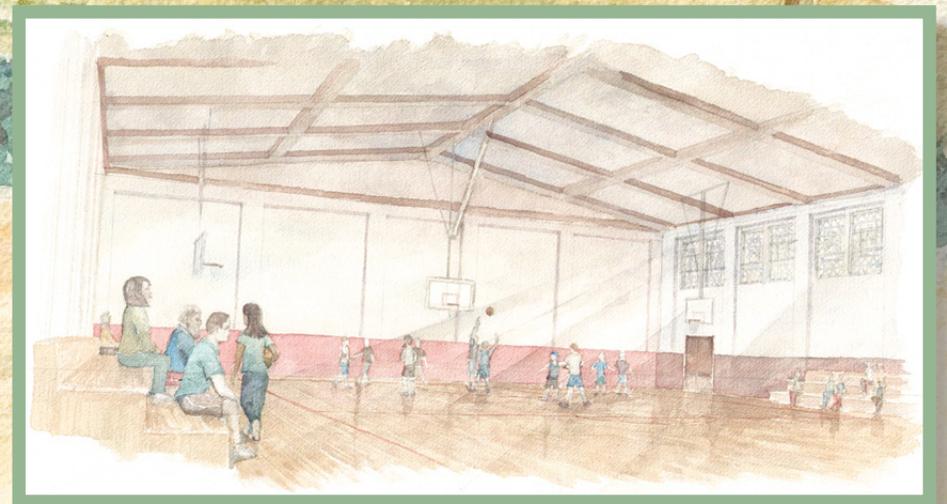
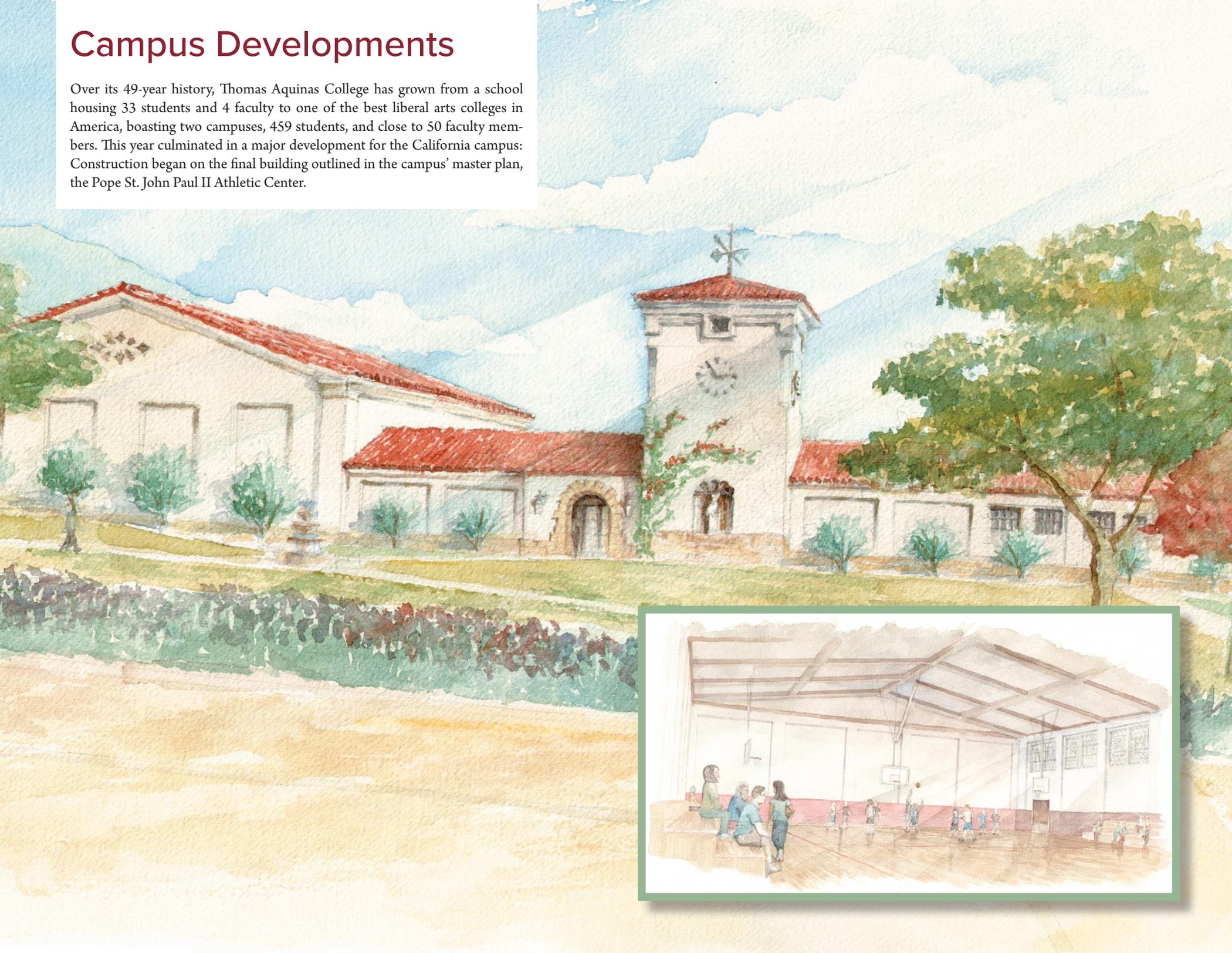
Amidst building anxiety concerning the novel coronavirus, President McLean announced on March 17 that the two campuses of Thomas Aquinas College would be closing for the safety of the students and the larger community. This news came as a blow to the students who bid hasty farewells before evacuating their respective campuses. But they rallied and ended the year strong, despite the drawbacks of lagging internet, online study groups, and socially distanced classes. By the grace of God, the College opened its doors to students again in the fall, albeit with its fair share of difficulties. In order to ensure the safety of the College community, new measures were necessary, including:

- Working closely with public health officials in both California and Massachusetts to create a safe re-opening plan;
- Investing in nearly 200 popup tents, outdoor tables, and chairs to accommodate outside classes on the California campus;
- Supplying PPE for all students and faculty;
- Implementing the ever-changing food-service guidelines on both campuses;
- Testing students before they returned to campus and again soon after their arrival;
- Frequent testing of students and faculty;
- Restricting student interactions off-campus;
- Making improvements to both campuses to encourage students to remain on campus, including renovating the California ponds and hiking trails, and renovating Tracy Student Center in New England.



# Campus Developments

Over its 49-year history, Thomas Aquinas College has grown from a school housing 33 students and 4 faculty to one of the best liberal arts colleges in America, boasting two campuses, 459 students, and close to 50 faculty members. This year culminated in a major development for the California campus: Construction began on the final building outlined in the campus' master plan, the Pope St. John Paul II Athletic Center.



1971

College opens in rented facilities in Calabassas, California.

1975

Mr. Larry Barker makes gift to the College of Ferndale Ranch in Santa Paula, California.

1979

The first permanent building, St. Joseph Commons, is dedicated.



1989

College builds the first women's residence, St. Katharine of Alexandria Hall.

1990



First classroom building, St. Augustine Hall, is completed.

1991

First men's residence, St. Bernard of Clairvaux Hall, is built.

1995



St. Bernardine of Siena Library is dedicated.

1996

St. Junipero Serra Hall opens.



1999

St. Thérèse of Lisieux Hall is built.

2000

The science building, Albertus Magnus Hall, is dedicated.



2002

Sts. Peter & Paul Hall, the last residence for men, is dedicated.

2004

St. Monica Hall is dedicated.

2007



Dedication of St. Thomas Hall.

2009



Dedication of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.

2014

St. Gladys Hall, the second classroom building, is dedicated.



2018

St. Cecilia Lecture and Concert Hall is dedicated.



2018

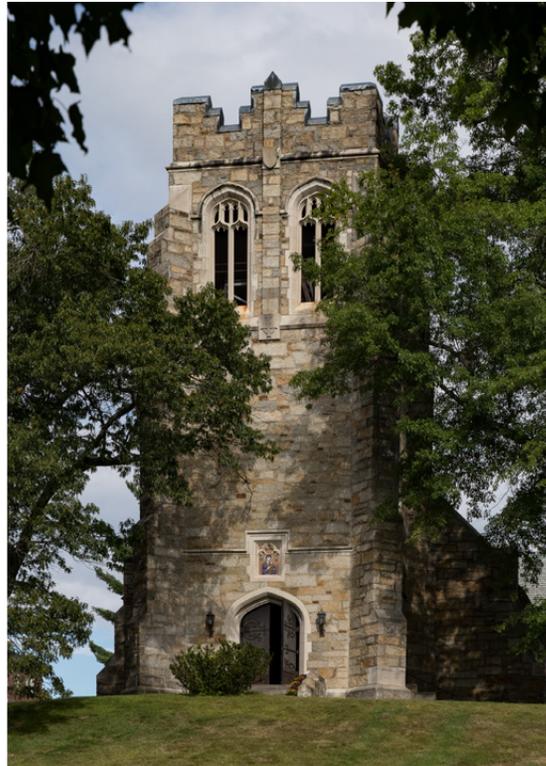
2019

2020

New England campus opens.



Our Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel is renovated.



Renovations to Tracy Student Center are completed.

# Admissions

With the addition of this year's freshmen, the student body on the College's newly opened East Coast campus has effectively doubled. And as Thomas Aquinas College, New England, continues to grow, so, too, does the College's reach. Interest in the new campus is great, as marked by high enrollment at the 2020 High School Summer Program (despite COVID-19 limitations). The College's student-retention rate — 89 percent, compared to the national average of 78 percent — augurs well for the future. The Admissions Office expects to reach full capacity on both campuses by 2030.

**1301**  
average SAT score  
of incoming freshmen  
national average: 1059

**89%**  
student-retention rate  
national average: 78%

**83%**  
graduation rate  
national average: 58.7%



#6 for Best Classroom Experience



#3 for Social Mobility



"Impressive Intellectual Rigor"



Top 50 "Best Bang for the Buck"



Best Educational Value in America



# Student Life

The legacy of the 2,189 alumni lives on in Thomas Aquinas College's students. Prior to the pandemic on both campuses this past year, students attended lectures, celebrated special occasions with dances, joined thousands at pro-life rallies, competed in intramural sports, and showcased their education with open houses.



In California, students relaxed in the newly renovated coffee shop, entertained with a rendition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and went head to head in games of TAC Jeopardy! and Trivial-Quadrivial Pursuit.



In New England, new traditions were forged, including an afternoon of epic Homeric games, an autumnal scarf-and-cider party, and a winter ski trip.



# Benefactors

The growth of TAC is due, in large part, to the increasing support of its alumni, parents, and friends. Over the past three years the generosity of our benefactors has grown significantly. Thank you for your support, and for allowing us to continue our work in helping to renew the face of the earth.

## All Funds Raised



The Days of Giving play a large role in our annual fundraising efforts, and they have gained momentum over the years. Thank you for rallying with your fellow friends, parents, or alumni to support Thomas Aquinas College!

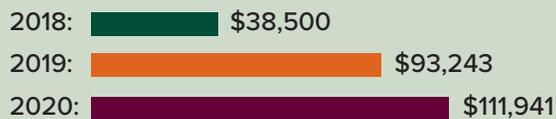
## Friends Week of Giving Appeal



## Parent Day of Giving Appeal



## Alumni Day of Giving Appeal

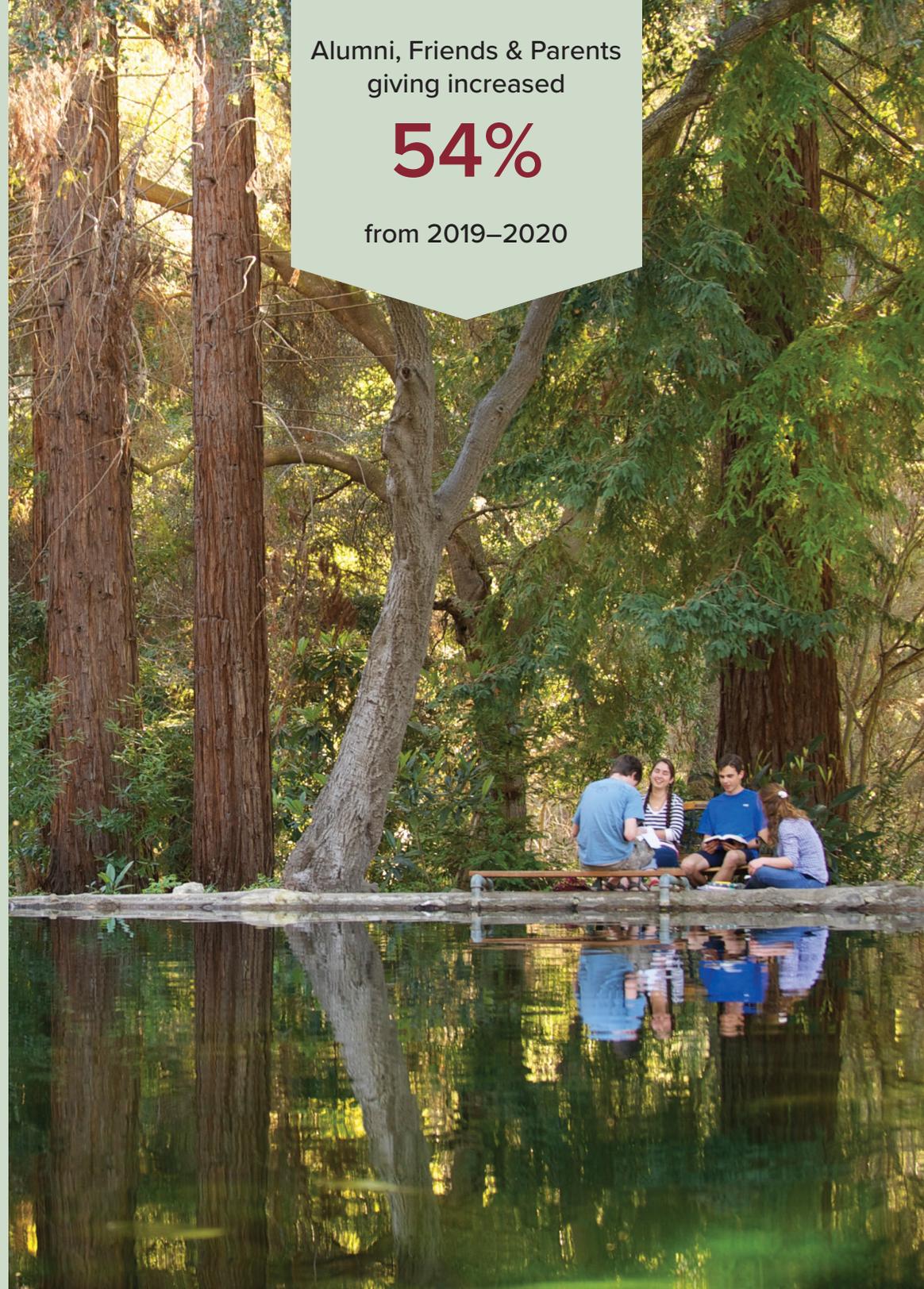


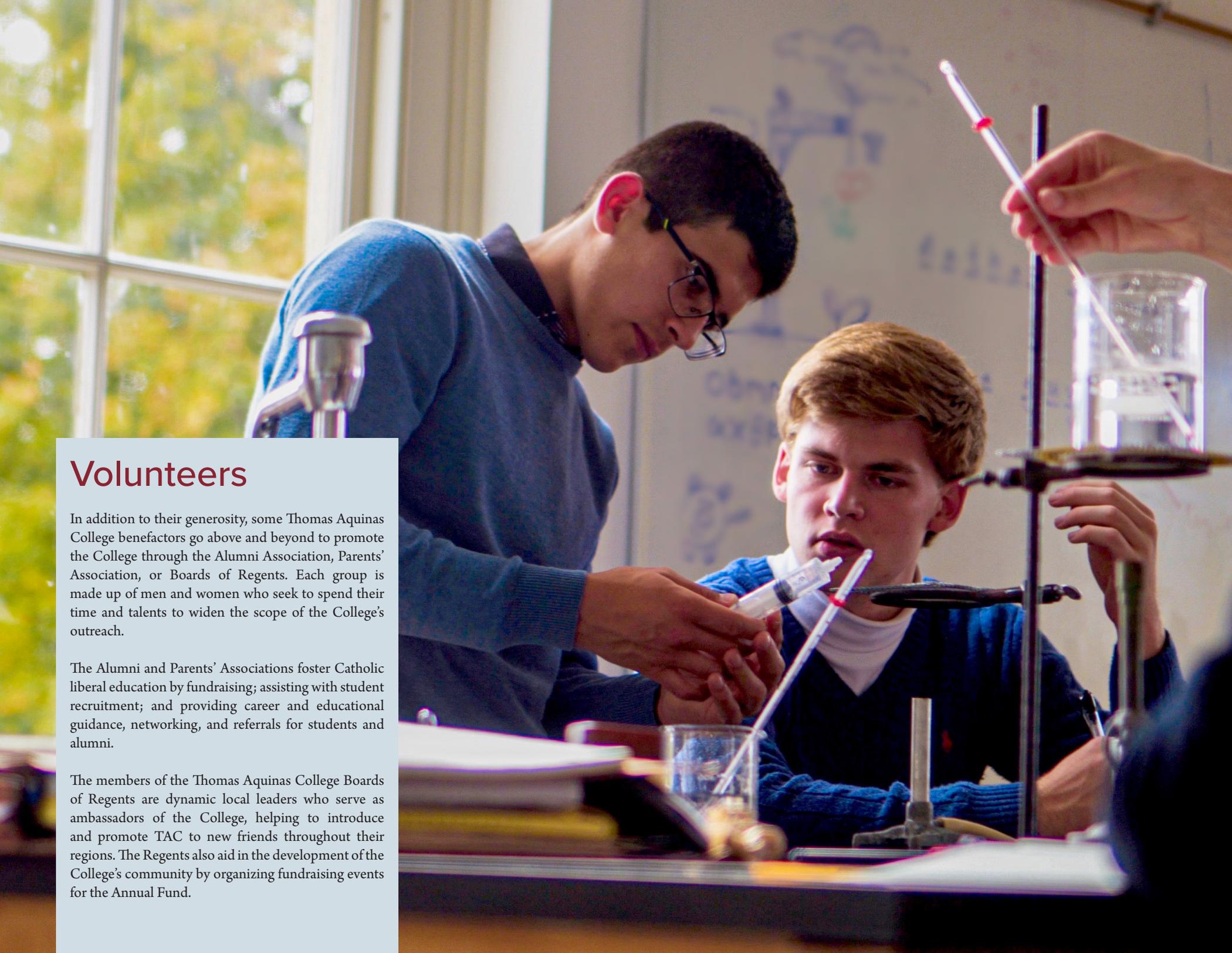
TAC alumni have the second-highest percentage of giving in the country, falling just two-tenths of one percent behind first place Princeton University.

Alumni, Friends & Parents  
giving increased

# 54%

from 2019–2020





## Volunteers

In addition to their generosity, some Thomas Aquinas College benefactors go above and beyond to promote the College through the Alumni Association, Parents' Association, or Boards of Regents. Each group is made up of men and women who seek to spend their time and talents to widen the scope of the College's outreach.

The Alumni and Parents' Associations foster Catholic liberal education by fundraising; assisting with student recruitment; and providing career and educational guidance, networking, and referrals for students and alumni.

The members of the Thomas Aquinas College Boards of Regents are dynamic local leaders who serve as ambassadors of the College, helping to introduce and promote TAC to new friends throughout their regions. The Regents also aid in the development of the College's community by organizing fundraising events for the Annual Fund.

# Called to do More?

With the expansion and renovation of the California and New England campuses comes increased operating costs. With the growing student body, we must spread the word about our unique program farther than ever before. With new generations of graduates, we are in need of mentors to guide alumni and current students as they find their career paths.

## How you can help:

### **Become a spiritual supporter**

Pray for the College and the well being of the students, faculty, board, and benefactors.

### **Become a monthly benefactor**

Contact Matt Plaisted, director of annual giving, at (805) 421-5989 or [mplaisted@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:mplaisted@thomasaquinas.edu).

### **Become a member of the Alumni Association, Parents' Association, or the Board of Regents**

Contact Rob Bagdazian, director of alumni and parent engagement, at (805) 421-5927 or [rbagdazian@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:rbagdazian@thomasaquinas.edu)

### **Become a careers mentor**

Contact Scott Benigar, director of student services, at (805) 421-5917 or [careers@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:careers@thomasaquinas.edu).

